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MACOMO,

The Kafir Chief.

London Richard Bentley New Burlington Street. 1854

THE CAPE

AND THE KAFIRS:

OR,

NOTES OF FIVE YEARS' RESIDENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

ALFRED W. COLE.

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PREFACE.

The following Notes are principally travelling sketches of scenes, manners and customs in the Cape Colony and on the Kafir frontier. They are intended to describe whatever the Author found most amusing or remarkable in those regions, and to record such of his personal adventures as tend to illustrate his subject; not mainly to advocate any political or social views he may entertain with regard to South Africa and its present or future condition.

It would be impossible, however, for the most superficial writer on the Cape to avoid, at the present moment, reference to many political matters — especially to the Kafir Wars, which have been the scourge of the country, and the direst, bloodiest and costliest of which is raging at this very moment. So much has been written both at home and in the Colony on this subject.

that it would seem to be well-nigh exhausted; but hitherto no good end has been attained by the various discussions it has originated. The Cape problem still remains unsolved—probably because the solution of it is so simple as to be constantly overlooked. Like other men, I have my own "theory" on the question, for which I can claim no more merit than this—that I conscientiously believe it to be in accordance with the wishes and opinions of the wisest, best-informed, and most interested of the Cape Colonists. As my theory is developed in various portions of this Work, I will only here refer to its main points.

1st. The granting of the most liberal constitution to the Colony.

2nd. The removal of the seat of Government from Cape Town to Graham's Town.

3rd. The restoration of the Commando system, or something equivalent to it; by which the Colonists may protect their own lives and property in their own method, against their marauding neighbours, and thus exonerating England from further draughts on her purse for the expenses of Kafir wars.

4thly. A better selection of Colonial Governors, utterly eschewing the "Major General" delusion.

5thly. The promotion of emigration to the Colony, as the greatest of all its wants.

I have also ventured some prophecies as to the termination of the present Kafir war. They are sad, but I fear they are true; and even now accounts reach me from those in the Colony best fitted to judge, of the wretched incompetence, the wrong-headed perseverance in absurd measures, the universal unpopularity, and the lamentable want of energy, of one on whom the present fate of South Africa seems to hang. I really think that all this may be traced in the very dispatches themselves which monthly startle us with accounts of fresh rebuffs, if not fresh defeats, encountered by British troops at the hands of armed savages.

But the steed on which I shall bear my reader through the following pages is less a war-horse than an ambling palfry, whose pace, I trust, will be found easy and agreeable, if neither showy nor fast. At all events he is easily pulled up at the end of any chapter, should the rider not find the journey interesting enough to continue on the road.

A. W. C.

London, *January*, 1852.

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THE

CAPE AND THE KAFIRS;

OR,

NOTES OF FIVE YEARS' RESIDENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

GO TO THE CAPE WITHOUT INTENDING TO DO SO. — SENSATIONS ON EMBARKING. — BEATING DOWN CHANNEL. — A PILOT. — DELAYS. — BAY OF BISCAY. — SEA-SICKNESS AND ITS DELIGHTS. — MY FELLOW-PASSENGERS. — STRANGE MIXTURE OF EMIGRANTS. — MIDNIGHT MORTALITY AMONG THE POULTRY. — SHORT OF FRESH PROVISIONS. — THE SMALL-POX ON BOARD. — CALM OFF THE COAST OF SOUTH AMERICA. — BAHIA. — SHORT OF PROVISIONS AGAIN. — STEER FOR THE CAPE. — THE REEF OF ROCKS. — ANCHORING BY NIGHT. — SHIPWRECK, AND ITS HORRORS. — ESCAPE, AND LANDING AT CAPE TOWN.

Most men, on leaving their native land for a foreign country, especially for one which is to be their abiding place for years, form some previous ideas of the climate, soil, people, and pursuits of the regions they are about to visit. So far from this being my own case, when I sailed from England on a voyage which terminated in

South Africa, I had not even the remotest notion of visiting that quarter of the globe at all. My destination, in my own idea, was New Zealand; but fate had decreed, that, instead of going to the antipodes, I should be carried to the land of Hottentots, and be there planted for a space of five years. Verily, *l'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose;* nor have I ever since felt inclined to murmur at the decrees of Providence in this instance. Had I reached New Zealand, I might have formed a side-dish at some select banquet of cannibal Maoris, instead of spending five happy years in the Cape Colony, and living to tell of my adventures by flood and field in these pages.

In the latter end of the month of March, 1841, I sailed from Gravesend in the emigrant ship, *Prince Rupert*, bound for New Zealand. Never shall I forget my sensations on embarking. I had visited the ship when lying in the London Docks, neat and trim, and *on show;* and I had engaged my passage with the comfortable reflection of having secured a good berth in an excellent ship. It certainly looked rather a queer little shelf, that "bunk" (as the sailors call it), in which I was to lie every night of my life for some six months—rather larger than a coffin, but not half so handsome. The cabin, too, about six feet by five, was

more snug than spacious. The cuddy, where forty people were to take breakfast, dinner, and tea together, appeared about the size of a saloon-carriage on the Brighton Railway. But all my doubts as to the capabilities of these different departments of the vessel to contain the various live stock destined to fill them, were met with such strong assurances on the part of the captain, that there was "plenty of room," and that "things looked so different at sea," accompanied by such smiles at my landsman's ignorance, that I made up my mind that it was all right, and that I was a remarkably lucky fellow in finding such an admirable ship, commanded by such a thorough-bred seaman. But, oh! what a contrast, when I again stepped on board that ship at Gravesend! One hundred and twenty emigrants and cabin-passengers were there, besides the crew. One hundred and twenty mortals' personal baggage strewed the decks, besides water-casks, hencoops, sheep-pens, boats, rigging, babies, dogs, and pigs! The sight and the sounds, and the conglomeration of odours, each intensely vile in itself, made me shudder; and I felt half inclined to rush back to land, forfeit my passage-money, and forswear all inclination "to roam the wide world o'er."

Perhaps I was more keenly alive to all these

discomforts and annoyances, because my mind was not distracted from them by other reflections. I had no weeping relatives around me, nor had I left any behind me; no fair one who held my heart captive in England, while I was fleeing bodily away; no ruined fortunes to lament over; no vast amount of *amor patriæ* to overcome. The truth is, I was leaving England because I felt that I was *de trop* in a country where every profession was overstocked, and where I, a young man, without fortune or friends, stood very little chance of fighting the battle of life with any very glorious result to myself.

In the course of the following day, things and people began to fall a little more into their proper places. We were expecting to sail every minute, but there was something wrong with the custom-house authorities, which detained us. We had the pleasing intelligence at last, that the ship was cleared, and we weighed anchor. A jolly, red-faced, old pilot, who drank about sixteen tumblers of grog per diem, and ate three hearty meals in the same time (not to mention an occasional biscuit or sandwich) took charge of our ship to Portsmouth. He soon discovered that she was as "cranky" (or top-heavy) as she could be, from bad stowing. We were, therefore, detained a

week or ten days at Portsmouth, while the ship was unloaded and re-stowed. Then another pilot took charge of us, and we dropped down to Plymouth, or rather beat our way down, for the wind was dead in our teeth. From Plymouth we sailed after an interval of two or three more days, and caught our last view of old England's shores in the beginning of May.

Did any one ever see a man who had crossed the Bay of Biscay in fine weather? For my own part, I firmly believe that the sun never shines there, and the wind never ceases to blow a hurricane. Fancy about one hundred human beings in the agonies of sea-sickness for a week; or, rather, you *cannot* fancy anything half so awful. Then the gradual recovering; the creeping out of your berth, and being pitched against the side of your cabin with the force of a racket-ball; the dull, heavy, half-giddy, half-drowsy sensation of your brain; the weakness and faintness of your whole body; the extreme hunger, yet extreme daintiness of your appetite; the disgusting smell of a close cabin, with an intermixture of fresh tar; the many fruitless attempts to get comfortably into your "inexpressibles," and at last the staggering up the companion-ladder on to the deck, and the scene that meets you there! A sea

and a sky of dirty brown,—the former rolling and tumbling about like a giant with the night-mare; and the vessel on which you stand, a little cock-boat tossed to-and-fro, and seeming, to your uninitiated eye, to be doomed to inevitable destruction.

The captain tells you we have had a "pretty stiff breeze, but it's all over now, and we're getting fine weather again;" and just as he says so, a big wave makes a jump at the quarter-deck, nearly knocks you overboard, and drenches you from head to feet. You don't like that sort of fine weather, so you retire to the cuddy, and determine to try your success at the dinner which the steward and his mates, who all seem to have been brought up as tight-rope dancers, so well do they balance themselves, are bringing in. You take your seat, and every now and then hug your neighbour most affectionately to prevent your joint upset. You think you will try "a little soup," and just at that moment the ship gives a terrific lurch, and the contents of the soup tureen most obligingly deposit themselves in your lap. You take some boiled chicken, and as you seize the parsley and butter, you pour it into your neighbour's wine-glass, instead of your own plate. You ask for some pale ale, and the steward's youngest and newest mate helps

you to it, by pouring half of it into your glass, and the other half down your back. You see a swinging trayful of glasses hanging just before you—the ship rolls,—you fancy the glasses are all coming on to you—you frantically try to *save them*, and by pulling them out of their equilibrium, the whole lot come down on to the table with a terrific crash! All this while (except when you break the glass-ware) the captain and the mate are making terrific inroads on all the provisions, discussing the weather, hob-nobbing over their wine, and looking as unconcerned as if an angle of forty-five degrees was the natural position of a gentleman's dining-table. You hate them both intensely.

Fine weather came at last, and I had an opportunity of observing my fellow-passengers. What a curious compound they were! There were Government officers going out to the new capital of New Zealand, of the very name of which we were then in a state of ignorance. These men had a remarkable sense of their own importance, and with their Government buttons, and gold bands round their caps, made a far more imposing appearance than the officers of the ship. There were gentlemen-farmers, innocent of the slightest acquaintance with ploughing and sowing, and

with very confused notions of the difference between barley and oats. There were self-styled "merchants," — gentlemen with heterogeneous cargoes on board, comprising everything from champaign to tin tacks, from Manchester prints to bowie-knives — gentlemen who intended to make fortunes by "doing" the Maoris, provided the latter did not eat them with the knives and forks of their own importing, and wash them down in their own champaign. Lastly, there were a few unfortunate young gentlemen, whose sole stock in trade, and possessions of every description, consisted of an outfit from Silver's, a fifty pound note, a good education, and a paternal blessing.

In the steerage were seventy or eighty emigrants of every description, but with no common point of resemblance, save that of prolificness. They had all huge families of children, which I understand is a very high recommendation with emigration-committees in general. There were ploughmen from Somersetshire, mechanics from Lancashire, shepherds from Scotland, seedy artizans from London, bog-trotters from Ireland, and a few ruined tradesmen from everywhere. They stared at one another, at first, like children of another race; but in a week or two, they began

to amalgamate in the most comically fraternal style. It is true that they were split somewhat into parties,—the "religious" party, and the "jolly" party, being the prominent ones. The former sang hymns out of tune, and the latter put an obligato accompaniment, with snatches of ditties much beloved at "Evans's," the "Coal-hole," and the "Cyder Cellars." They had no recognized head,—for the emigration commissioners, having once shipped their live cargo, left them to shift for themselves. The Captain had too much to do to look after their meals or their morals, though both were occasionally outrageously bad. The supercargo said he had "other fish to fry." The surgeon listened to no complaint but one which required physic. So the unfortunate creatures were left to fight their battles out among themselves, under the semi-guidance of a broken tradesman, whom they in conclave elected their chief, and who thought the principal ingredient of royalty was the liberty to do nothing but what pleased him.

I have omitted the children from this summary of our little community: but I assure you, good reader, I shall never *forget* them. A more riotous set of little imps were never sent on earth to plague a sensitive bachelor's nerves; nor any

with more voracious appetites. They positively (at least so the Captain swore) almost brought us to a state of starvation. Certain it is that fresh provisions began to run very short. Fowls had a most unaccountable way of dying in the night. A healthy and hardy looking cock, old enough, too, not to be easily upset, would meet with a sudden death in his coop at night; and to our great sorrow be found a corpse in the morning. The cook would be ordered to throw him overboard, but Jack in the forecastle would beg to have him, they "were n't no ways partiklar;" and so they would roast the defunct fowl, and devour him with relish. At last the cook, being a shrewd fellow, began to suspect foul play (no pun, upon my honour, dear reader). He watched, and detected the mystery. A hand was thrust into a hen-coop, an unlucky fowl seized, one of his feathers pulled out, and then thrust into his wind-pipe. The fowl died, and there were no marks of violence. But murder (even of a cock) will out. The trick being discovered, Jack's grog was stopped for a month, and all fowls dying henceforth peremptorily ordered to be thrown overboard, in spite of any besecching from the forecastle. The sudden mortality among the poultry forthwith ceased.

We were bound in the first instance, to Bahia in Brazil, to take in fresh provisions; but long before we reached that haven our stock had fallen short. We were reduced first to preserved meats, and afterwards to salt junk and pork. Now, as eating and drinking appears to every one at sea the very aim and end of existence, such an event as this was regarded as the direst calamity. Every one was ill-tempered, and quarrelled with every one else; the Captain quarrelled with all of us at once. Then we all began fishing; caught albicores and bonitas, cooked them, and ate them in spite of the cook's warning of the consequences, which were to place six or seven under the doctor's care. Then, by way of an agreeable variation to our ordinary topics of complaints and fears, the small-pox broke out among the emigrants in the steerage. Inquiries were instituted, and it was ascertained that nobody could recollect when he had been vaccinated, and some strongly suspected that they had never been vaccinated at all. Of course everybody must be vaccinated at once. The doctor was called in, and confessed that he had no vaccine matter on board. Horror and indignation seized us, and we were almost inclined to take summary vengeance on the monster, and throw him overboard.

We eyed him askance like a pickpocket, and made his life wretched, as he well deserved it should be, for going to sea without vaccine matter.

For a fortnight or three weeks we lay becalmed off the coast of South America. The shore was distinctly visible, and with our glasses we could even see figures on the beach. Delicious odours were wafted to us by the gentlest of land-breezes, which occasionally sprang up towards evening. The land seemed fertile, and we knew that it abounded in fruit and vegetables, and everything we wanted. We were near it, yet could not reach it.

> "The worse than Tantalus' was our annoy,
> To clip Elysium, and to lack its joy."

At length a breeze sprang up, and a few hours' sail brought us to the entrance of the Bahia de todos los Santos. It was a lovely evening as we sailed up the neck of the bay, reached the harbour, and cast anchor off the city of St. Salvador, or Bahia. But our patience was destined to a further trial! we could not land till the port authorities had visited us, which would not be till the next morning.

This Bay of All Saints is one of the finest in the world for scenery, extent, and security. The situation of the city is striking, and its appear-

ance imposing, in more senses than one. It rises almost in the form of an amphitheatre, with stately palms overtopping its white houses, and giving it a thoroughly tropical appearance. Below it lie at anchor ships of all nations, the British ensign conspicuous among them in all directions. Opposite to it is the shore of Vera Cruz; and half way between, in the neck of the bay, is the Island of Taporica. Innumerable boats and small craft, from the graceful felucca, with her fairy-like lateen sails, skimming over the dark blue water, to the clumsy catamaran, consisting of a raft of three or four planks joined together, and a pole with a square sail in the middle, thronged the bay. Dozens of row-boats were round our ship, waiting to convey us to shore, in case we got a clean bill of health, as we did, notwithstanding the visit of the small-pox.

I jumped into a boat with a friend, and was soon on shore. Passing through a merchant's store, we emerged into a street, which, though curious and characteristic (the ground floor of every house being quite open) was dirty, ill-paved, ill-smelling, and crowded with negroes. We jumped into a couple of *cadeiras* (a sort of South American sedan), and were trotted off to the best hotel in the town.

The upper town is decidedly superior to the lower. But Bahia is, after all, a dirty, ill-looking place, except from the sea. We remained in it about three weeks, for the *Prince Rupert* was never in a hurry, and we were well content to taste the luxuries of South America. The weather was desperately warm, but clear and beautiful; the country around was superb, provisions were cheap, and fruit abundant. We appeared to be great favourites with the negroes, because we were Englishmen and countrymen of William Wilberforce, whose portrait I constantly found hanging in the houses of liberated slaves. The Portuguese or Brazilians, on the contrary, eyed us with evil glances; but they are such ill-looking animals that I shall doubt whether they ever bear a pleasant aspect to any one. Let me except the ladies, however, who when seen peeping from the curtains of a *cadeira*, or the half-closed *persiennes* of their houses, or, still better, when kneeling at mass with their black mantillas thrown back, and their dark eyes raised in the fervour of devotion, appeared generally good-looking, and occasionally very handsome. The few I conversed with were tolerably animated and agreeable, but by no means intellectual.

At length, with heavy hearts and a light

breeze, we bade adieu to South America, intending to make the run direct to New Zealand. We little imagined that some of us were never destined to reach it. After we had been at sea about a fortnight, it became evident that the stock of fresh provisions and live stock which we had taken three weeks to lay in, would barely last three weeks more. Everybody began to get quarrelsome again, and four duels were fixed to come off as soon as we should reach *terra firma*. After much discussion, the captain consented to put into the Cape, and see whether he could be more successful in his calculations of the requisites for our voyage then.

In about a month more we came in sight of the Cape mountains. Early one morning (the 4th of September), the captain pointed out to us Table Mountain, beneath which lies Cape Town, which he expected to reach in the course of the day. But the *Prince Rupert* was a terrible old tub to sail, and night began to set in while we were yet at some distance from the land.

The darkness increased—the lead was hove every minute, and the rough voice of the leadsman continued its monotonous cry of the number of fathoms of water. A light gleamed in the distance—it was the old Green Point Lighthouse,

marking an extensive reef of rocks to be shunned. We steered far to the north of it. The leadsman's voice still cries the fathoms. The captain declares that we have reached the outer anchorage in the neck of Table Bay. We shorten sail.

"Let go the anchor."

The order is obeyed, and the good ship swings round head to wind, which is blowing stiffly on shore. A distant sound, as of some giant caldron boiling, strikes on our ears. It is the roar of the breakers on that fearful reef of rocks. The sound is nearer and more distinct every moment. A faint suspicion seizes the captain's mind,—

"Heave the lead!"

It is done; and the rough voice proclaims,

"Four fathoms—hard rock!"

Louder and louder roars the giant caldron. Surely we are moving backwards in spite of anchor and cable. A low grating sound mingles with the roar of the breakers, and a slightly tremulous motion shakes our vessel. Then there is a violent crash, and the ship staggers as if smitten by some unearthly power below. There is a moment's silence, and then there bursts forth a cry of terror and despair from one hundred and fifty human beings!

"Set the gib, and slip the cable," are the

orders roared forth to the crew; but it is too late! The wind takes the sail aback, and the ship is hurled forthwith with threefold force again on to the rocks, released now from even the trammels of her anchor dragging on their polished surface. The wind increases, and the breakers dash over our ship and lift it up one moment, and again dash it furiously down, as though in anger at our intrusion on their domains. Everything, lashed or unlashed, is giving way; spars are falling; a mast goes overboard; there is a cry for "the boats." They are useless—positively unfit for any other purpose than that of sheep-pens—all save the gig, which will hold about twelve persons. It is all the means of escape provided for one hundred and fifty human beings! We are four miles from Cape Town. The night is pitch dark, and surely no ship will hold together till daylight, thus hurled about on adamantine rocks. Death stares us in the face. Guns are fired in distress; but who shall hear them at four miles' distance, amid that crash and roar of the elements? Men are raving, and (even in that awful moment) cursing. Women are shrieking and hugging their children to their bosoms, and praying God to spare their innocent lives. Abject fear has seized on some—

the courage of desperation on others. The men rush to the spirit-lockers. I and another have posted ourselves there with loaded pistols, and we swear to shoot the man who shall attempt to pass. There is a cry for volunteers to man the gig. They are soon found. She is launched into the boiling surf, and disappears from our eyes; but whether in safety or to instant destruction, we know not. Four long hours of agony are passed, each moment like the last we have to live. The ship is as full of water as she can be, resting on those rocks. How long will she hold together at all?

There is a shout on deck—a shout of joy. We have been hailed by our gig's crew, who have returned with aid from Cape Town. We are saved!

The surf bids fair to swamp the boats that venture alongside our ship, and two share that fate. Five men are drowned; and one of them is the gallant mate* of an Indiaman, who was the first to hasten to our assistance. At length we are all clear of the ship, which is abandoned to its fate.

* This was Mr. Mereweather, the son of the well-known Mr. Serjeant Mereweather. His body, which was afterwards cast on shore, was followed to the grave not only by all my fellow-passengers, but by half the inhabitants of Cape Town also.

I was carried myself on board an East Indiaman lying at anchor in Table Bay, having been the last passenger to quit the ship, and being unwilling to give my kind preservers the trouble of taking me on shore that night. With them I remained till the next morning talking of our wonderful escape; for had not our ship been originally built for the Hudson's Bay Company, and doubly fastened to stand the jams of icebergs, she must have gone to pieces (as many a fine vessel had before done on that same reef) long before aid could reach us; and every soul must have perished by the most fearful of deaths.

On the morning of the fifth of September, I was put on shore. My clothes, my money, my letters for New Zealand—all that I possessed, was by this time

"Deep in the bosom of the ocean buried."

Seven or eight thousand miles from home—without friends, clothes, or money! Such was the extremely pleasant condition in which I first stepped ashore in the Cape Colony.

CHAPTER II.

"RAISING THE WIND."—CAPE TOWN.—ASCENDING TABLE MOUNTAIN.—DISAPPOINTMENTS AND ALARMS.—TEA AND COFFEE AL FRESCO.—PUBLIC LIBRARY.—THE WRECK.—GOVERNMENT GARDENS.—QUEER SHEEP.—CAPE WAGONS.—RONDEBOSCH, WYNBERG, AND CONSTANTIA.—WINE OF THE LATTER.—CAPE CHAMPAIGN.—CAPE WINE IN GENERAL.—SUGGESTIONS FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT.—HINTS TO SPECULATORS.—A CLOSE SHAVE.—A DIFFICULTY REMOVED.

My reflections and prospects were anything but agreeable. The first thing to be done—the thing imperative—was to "raise the wind." I went to a gentleman, who was a merchant in Cape Town, but quite unknown to me, told him my position, and he very kindly cashed my bill on England. Having obtained the sinews of war, I determined to await the chapter of accidents; and, in the meantime, I began to examine Cape Town and its environs.

The capital of the Cape colony is rather prettily situated. Behind it rises Table Mountain, almost perpendicularly, and quite flat at the top. It is about thirty feet higher than Snowdon. On

the right of Table Mountain, separated from it by a hollow or pass, is another double-topped mountain, called the Lion's Head, and the Lion's Rump, from its supposed resemblance to a lion *couchant*. On the left of Table Mountain is a lofty pointed mountain called the Devil's Head. When a violent south-east wind is expected, a white cloud appears, gradually forming itself over the top of Table Mountain, and this is termed "The Devil laying his Table-cloth." These south-east winds blow with immense fury; and as they blow off shore, they do little harm to the shipping.

Cape Town, therefore, lies completely surrounded by mountains, which occasionally make it tremendously hot; and it looks the very place for thunder-storms. And yet, though the Cape is renowned for those unpleasant visitations, which are generally terrific, they are almost unknown in Cape Town. A gentleman who had resided there for twenty-three years, assured me that he had only witnessed two in that period, and neither of them of any violence.*

It is an amusement in Cape Town to ascend Table Mountain, and see the sun rise. The sight

* The general reader may not be aware that thunder and lightning are unknown at St. Helena. I shall not soon forget the horror of a native of that island, shortly after her arrival in South Africa, at beholding her first thunder-storm.

is extremely grand, from the circumstance of the ocean lying at the very foot of the mountain. The ascent to the "Old Gentleman's" dining-table is, however, very tedious, by a winding path cut or worn up the side of the mountain. Some of my friends and myself, full of the climbing propensities natural to Englishmen and cockneys, determined to make the excursion. Accordingly, at two o'clock one morning we started with coolies carrying provisions, firewood, and cooking utensils (Soyer's patent stove was not then invented). What hard work it was toiling up that rugged path, after being cooped up for months on board ship with about twenty or thirty feet space to walk on! I am tolerably light and active myself, so that I stood the climbing well. But one of the party was a short, fat, pursy man, of about sixteen stone weight—a *bon vivant*, and a man averse to unnecessary exertion. How he laboured and groaned, puffing in a style that would have been an honour to a youthful grampus; and lamenting his folly in attempting "such a getting up-stairs!"

Here and there on the way are caves, made by benevolent people as resting-places. We halted thankfully on reaching the first of these, and lighted a fire to prepare some coffee. Mercy on

that beef, my good stout friend! We have far to go, and many an hour to pass yet.

We start again. Confound those nimble-footed coolies. What a pace they go at! Surely their sinews must be made of wire. We look eagerly up for the next cave. Toil on—it is higher and higher yet. How the stones slip away under one's feet, and roll down the precipitous path. How agreeable to do likewise! Another cave is reached, and the short man hints at more beef. We won't stand it, so he consoles himself with a long pull, and a strong pull, at a pocket-pistol loaded with veritable *eau-de-vie de Cognac.*

Forward again; but much more slowly now, for the path is steeper than ever, and our limbs are getting weary. Still we must press on, for the hour of sunrise is drawing nigh, and we shall be too late. How slowly the height above us seems to diminish! Patience, patience! It is reached at last.

Now we turn for a glorious sight, and see that the sun has already risen far above the horizon. We are too late—a very pleasant reflection for us after all our labour and fatigue. We glance towards Cape Town and Table Bay, and see nothing but a thick white mist. We turn round and see a large flat plain, which forms the top of

the mountain, covered with long grass, and a solitary baboon, who appears to wonder who the deuce we are. We resolve to make the best of our ill-luck, and to take breakfast. The provisions are spread out temptingly—our appetites are keen—our stout friend plunges a fork into the beef, and raises his knife preparatory to a violent attack—when suddenly there is a cry of alarm from our guides. A great white cloud is approaching us—"the devil's table-cloth" by all that is fearful! We hasten for our lives, for there is but one way down the mountain, and should that be obscured from us, we must inevitably lose our footing, and be dashed to atoms. Haste, haste!

Our stout friend has flung down his knife and fork, unmindful of beef and *eau-de-vie*—forgetful of the fatigues he had endured, and heedless of the love of the picturesque, which had led him to brave them. He was running for his life, as fast as a short pair of bolster legs would carry him; and he saved it. And we all returned to Cape Town sleepy, tired, hungry, and ill-tempered. Our expedition had been even less glorious than the one celebrated by some unknown bard, who tells us,—

> "The king of France, with twice ten thousand men,
> Marched up a hill and then—marched down again."

Cape Town is very regularly built,—all the streets being at right angles. It is clean and rather pretty, and contains about twenty thousand inhabitants. The houses are all stuccoed; many of them have trees in front of them, and all of them a terrace or *stoep*, as the Dutch call it, with a seat at each end. Here the family assemble on all the bright warm evenings (and when are they otherwise in that delicious climate?) to take coffee, chat over the events of the day, and enjoy the cool air. Your neighbours never think of watching you at such moments; they are too much occupied themselves in a similar way to notice you, and the passengers in the streets are too accustomed to these *al fresco* meetings to remark them. They are very pleasant things those same *stoeps*. To walk there at night arm-in-arm with a fair friend, into whose eyes you look alternately with the stars, to sit with her under the shade of the orange-tree that grows at one end of the little terrace, and to talk —— a great deal of delicious nonsense—all this, let me assure you, good sober *compatriote*, over your sea-coal fire, is mightily pleasant and entertaining in that land of the sunny south.

The glory of Cape Town is its public library, which is unsurpassed by any similar institution

in any dependency of Great Britain—not excepting Calcutta. It contains fifty or sixty thousand volumes, admirably selected and arranged, and placed in a building which is as comfortable and convenient a place for reading as I have ever seen. It is a wing of the Commercial Hall of the town, and is situate on the grand parade ground. To strangers, and indeed to all, it is perfectly free; but a small annual subscription is required from those who wish to take books home. By the way, I noticed, in my constant visits to the library, that whenever the uniform of Her Majesty's service was seen within its walls, it was that of the engineers or artillery. The army in general is by no means literary.

All this time I am forgetting my old ship. She went to pieces shortly after we left her. I went out to Green Point to look at her from the shore, and felt by no means lively at the thought that my "personals" were all at the bottom of the sea. Still I trust I felt duly grateful that I had not gone with them. On the following day I climbed up to the signal-station on the Lion's Rump, whence vessels bound for Table Bay are first sighted. The signal-man told me that he had made us out early in the day; but felt sure that we should not attempt to enter the bay after dark.

It was, in fact, a piece of most abominable recklessness on the part of our captain.

I looked down at our wreck, and from the height on which I stood I could distinctly trace the whole reef of rocks. It was terrific—extending between two and three miles into the sea. The old lighthouse was placed in such an inconvenient position, that we had been actually on the rocks, and yet out of sight of the light which should have warned us off. The first man whose acquaintance I made on shore was Major Mitchell, the surveyor-general of the Colony. He had lately returned from England, with full power and authority to erect a new lighthouse on Green Point; and he told me that the spot selected was the very one on which we had gone ashore. The new lighthouse now actually stands there.

In the upper part of Cape Town stands the Government-house and gardens—the latter being public. There is nothing very picturesque or attractive in them, nor did I see any object worthy of notice there, except a couple of gigantic tortoises (one of them the remarkable old gentleman now in London) and a couple of Cape sheep, which deserve a line or two of description.

Cape sheep in general are very extraordinary animals. They have no wool, but a sort of coarse

shaggy hair, and in shape strongly resemble goats. They are perfectly lean except at the tail, which is a huge mass of fat dangling down to their hocks, and curling sharply up at the extremity like a turn-up nose. It seems as if Nature had squeezed all the fat of the unfortunate creatures into this nether appendage, which is used for the same purposes as lard. "Running to tail," by the way, seems to be very general in more of the animal creation at the Cape, than sheep. The reader will recollect the stories of the Hottentot Venus, which I can assure him, are by no means exaggerated. The two sheep in the Government Gardens, however, surpassed all other sheep in caudal magnitude. Their tails were so enormous, and so heavy, that they had little wicker-work go-carts, to which they were fastened, and in which they rested.

One of the first sights that strikes the eye of a stranger at the Cape, is the regular Cape wagon. There is one to be seen at Cummings's South African Exhibition. From the pole of this vehicle is a long rope of plaited thongs, called a "trek-tow;" at regular intervals along this are fixed the yokes for twelve, fourteen, or sixteen oxen (I have even seen twenty-two to one wagon). The oxen are fastened together by the horns with thongs,

or "reims" of leather. On the driving-box of the wagon sits a Hottentot, with an enormously long bamboo whip-handle, and a lash twice the length of the handle. With this unwieldy-looking contrivance, which he holds in both hands, he can touch up any of his team, or "span," of oxen with great effect; but he generally contents himself with cracking it furiously over their heads. The two front oxen are led by a Hottentot boy, who is serving a kind of apprenticeship to become a driver. The whole turn-out is a most comical-looking affair, and serves for every kind of conveyance and transport, whether of persons or goods. It is your travelling-carriage, your tent, your dwelling, and your store-house on a journey. It carries your corn or your wool to market, or your wife and family to church. Nothing upsets it, though the roads are occasionally the most villanous in the world, while it seems capacious enough to carry a small family and a month's provender conveniently.

In Cape Town, however, are to be seen private carriages of all descriptions, and very superior horses. Most of the merchants keep their phæton, and their buggy, and a saddle horse or two. They are generally driven by Malays, who wear hats of dried grass, made in the exact form

of the top of a Chinese pagoda. They look rather odd to an English eye; but they are very sensible contrivances against sun and rain.

Rondebosch is the Richmond of Cape Town: the merchants have their dwellings there, as it is cooler and more agreeable in the hot weather than Cape Town. This village is situate only a few miles off, and the road to it is excellent. All the houses are handsome and well-built, with large gardens before and behind, filled with flowers and fruit-trees. Wynberg is another village on the same road, a little further on, and equally pretty and agreeable. Omnibuses run several times a day to and from Cape Town to both places. Omnibuses in the land of Hottentots and hippopotami! What a subject for reflection!

Beyond Wynberg the road loses its trim, pretty, artificial appearance, and becomes more African and barren. No—not barren either; for who could apply such a term to land covered with an innumerable variety of Cape heaths in full bloom?—aloes, wild stocks and a thousand other delicate and lovely plants making a natural carpet, more beautiful than all the corn-fields and gardens of civilization! This road leads to Constantia,—famed for the delicious wine to which it gives its name.

There are but three farms, situated on the side of a hill, where the grape, producing this beautiful wine, grows. It has been tried, but without success, in various other parts of the Colony. Even a mile from the hill, the wine is of a very inferior description. The hill is named after the wife of one of the former governors of the Cape, —whether from the lady's too great fondness for its productions, history saith not.

The Constantia wine-farmers are rich men, and have elegant and well-furnished houses, surrounded by gardens and their vineyards. The names of the three farms and their proprietors are,—High Constantia, Van Reenen ; Great Constantia, Cloete ; Little Constantia, Coligne. A visit to them is a treat.

I started in a gig with a fellow-passenger. *He* drove, though truth compels me to declare that he was an awfully bad "whip." On stopping to pay toll at the turnpike, we inquired our way, so as to make quite sure of taking the right road. The "pikeman" grinned as he answered us, and "hoped we'd look as well when we comed back." Pocketing the change, I asked him rather indignantly what he meant.

"Oh, no offence, on'y I've seed a many as looks very different arter swallowing the sweet stuff

there, that's all ;" and the fellow gave a nod and a leer, intended to be knowing, while my friend whipped up the hired animal rather savagely, and nearly pitched me out backwards, by the suddenness of the spring forwards taken by the gig.

On arriving at High Constantia, we found a carriage and four, two buggies, and several saddle-horses in the grounds, waiting for a party of Indian visitors, who had come to see " the lions." In the dining-room an elegant luncheon was laid out, for any that chose to partake of it, while several attendants were in waiting, ready to conduct visitors over the gardens, vineyards, storehouses, cellars, &c. At first we imagined that it was some gala day ; but we soon discovered that this was the ordinary style in which things were managed every day. It gave us a good opinion of South African hospitality, and also of the comfortable circumstances of Constantia wine-farmers. We visited the vineyards, which are kept beautifully neat and trim ; and we then went to the storehouses, which are models of cleanliness. Here we tasted a dozen varieties of the delicious wine; and I began to have an idea of the exact meaning of the " pikeman's" observation. Nothing can be more seductively delicious than the purest and best Constantia. I may remark, however, that I

have never tasted a perfect specimen of it in England. The greater quantity of so-called Constantia, sold in London, is sweet Pontac, a very inferior wine, grown all over the Cape Colony,—at least, wherever there are wine-farms.

We afterwards visited the other two farms, and found everything equally handsome, liberal, clean, and well-ordered; and we tasted all the varieties of each of these also. I now began to have a *very* clear idea of the "pikeman's" meaning.

A few words on Cape wine in general. It has a vile name, and it has well earned it. Most of us drink a little of it now and then, certainly; but then we call it sherry, or Madeira, or port (if it is red Pontac). Decidedly the worst product of the Cape vines are sent to England. I have often endeavoured to persuade the farmers that this is bad policy on their part; but their reply is, that Cape wine has a bad name in the market; that it is bought there without any distinction of vintage or class; and that the worst of it brings as good a price as the best. And yet there is a vast difference in the various qualities; and even the best of them are susceptible of wonderful improvement.

There is a great similarity between the Cape and the Madeira grape. Both are cultivated

much in the same manner, and in both the natural acidity is great; but the grand point of difference between the two is in the time of gathering the grapes. In Madeira they are not gathered till so ripe that many begin to fall, and are withered from over ripeness; these, of course, are rejected. By this means a smaller amount of wine is obtained from a vineyard than would have been produced, had the grapes been gathered earlier; but the quality of the wine is improved beyond conception. Every grape is full, ripe, and luscious, and the wine partakes of its quality. Nothing can prove more clearly the necessity of the grape being fully, and even *over* ripe, than the difference of the wine produced on the north side of the island of Madeira, where this perfection of the grape can scarcely be attained, and that grown on the South side:—the latter is luscious and rich; the former is Cape, or little better. Now at the Cape the object of the farmer is always to get the greatest *quantity* of wine from his vineyard; and, consequently, he gathers his grapes when they are barely ripe, and none have fallen or withered; whereby he fills his storehouses with wine full of that acidity and vile twang which all who have tasted shudder to recall.

Some of the wine-growers in the colony have lately pursued a different course, and with vast success. This has chiefly been among the English colonists, for a Dutch boer is a very untractable animal, and not easily induced to swerve from old systems, be they ever so bad. Probably the principal reason why the colony produced, from the very first, such bad wines, was its having been colonized by Dutchmen, who were without any previous experience in wine-growing. Who knows what might have been the difference, had a colony from the plains of Champagne or Bordeaux first settled there ?

Apropos of this suggestion,—I had a fellow-passenger, a M. L—, who came from Champagne. He was a very clever fellow,—one of those "adaptable" men, whom you might throw suddenly into any land on the face of the globe, without a *sou* in their pockets, or any letter of recommendation but their own self-confidence, and be very sure to find them, after a few months, highly prosperous and respectable men. He had *been*, and *done*, everything, from teaching French to commanding a privateer. When he found himself thrown upon his own resources at the Cape, without a sixpence, or a second suit of clothes, M. L— whistled "Ça ira," and resolved

to make his fortune out of some one who *had* money. Don't mistake me, reader. Monsieur's intentions were highly laudable and honourable, for he not only resolved to make his fortune by another man's means, but at the same moment to make that very individual's fortune also. And he succeeded, by making Cape Champagne! He entered into partnership with a young Englishman (also a fellow-passenger) and took a wine-farm. The Englishman supplied the capital,—the Frenchman the knowledge. He had been originally brought up in a Champagne vineyard, and he recollected all about the process; or if he forgot any portion of it, he could run into the library, and overhaul a cyclopedia to supply the deficiency. This was true genius, and it met with success. At many a public dinner in England (and at many a private one too), when swallowing something, dignified with the name of the right royal wine, have I sighed to think how far preferable would be a bottle of Messrs. B. and L.'s vintage.

From observation and experience I am, however, inclined to think that a company might be profitably established here, or at the Cape, for cultivating the vine in the Colony, and importing its produce to Europe; but they must send out

their own labourers and superintendents—carefully selected from the best vineyards in Germany or France; take care to adopt the Madeira plan of gathering the grapes; agitate for a reduction of the duty on the wine, which is too high; and do all they can to get rid of their greatest obstacle—a bad name in the market. Think of it speculators!

All this while the gig is waiting to take my friend and myself back to Cape Town. We get in and drive off.

"I say, Jones, that was a near shave through that gate,—mind what you're about, old fellow."

"A miss is (*hiccup*) as good as a mile."

"Certainly, only take care that it *is* a miss."

"Never fear, my (*hiccup*) Trojan."

Jones looks a great deal too knowing out of those fishy eyes for me to feel perfectly comfortable; but he *will* drive.

"I tell you what, old (*hiccup*) boy, that sweet wine's (*hiccup*) stunning; I've ordered three b-b-b- (*hiccup*) butts of it!"

"Three butts of it! What the deuce do you mean, Jones? Are you mad? Where did you tell them to send it?"

"Up to your cr-cr-cr- (*hiccup*) crib, to be sure."

"The devil you did!"

"Yes, and I gave 'em your n-n-n-name, too. We'll soon drink it, you know!"

I had a very strong inclination to pitch Mr. Jones out of the gig. A very pretty predicament for me, truly. To have three butts of the best Constantia sent to my lodgings, which consisted of two small rooms; and, of course, the wine would be booked to me. I insisted that Jones should drive back, and countermand the order, whereupon he was indignant, and asked me, with drunken indignation, "if I meant to say I thought he couldn't pay." I certainly did think so, seeing that the worthy gentleman had borrowed money from every one he knew, and was already pretty well in my debt. However, Jones positively refused to return, and therefore I was obliged to resign myself to my fate.

After driving for about an hour along what seemed to me a very circuitous route, we were approaching the entrance to some grounds, very like those we had quitted. On coming still nearer, Jones remarked that "he did not recollect passing this d—d place before." I did. So I suggested that I would just run in and ask the way. I left him for a minute, and returned with full instructions as to our route, and with much

persuasion managed to keep my friend to the right road to Cape Town.

I had no fears about the wine now, for we had returned to Constantia, and I had countermanded the order. Jones knew nothing about it next day.

CHAPTER III.

DETERMINATION TO REMAIN IN THE COLONY.—CAPE FISHERMEN.—NEGLECT OF THE FISHERIES.—THE MALAYS.—A HINT TO MISSIONARIES.—MALAY FESTIVALS, AND COCKNEY COMMENTS THEREON.—SIMON'S TOWN AND BAY.—ANOTHER SIGNBOARD.—CAPE INNKEEPER.—DIALOGUE WITH ONE OF THEM.—BARON VON LUDWIG'S GARDEN—THE GOVERNMENT ONE DEFUNCT.—PALTRY ECONOMY—CAPE TOWN RACES.—DESCRIPTION OF THE ROAD TO THE COURSE.—STRANGE EQUIPAGES.—NOVEL RIDING.—GEOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.—DISCOVERING A FOSSIL.—A "STATE" CABIN.—ADIEU TO CAPE TOWN.

A NEW ship was being chartered for such of us as chose to proceed to New Zealand. For my own part, the Cape had struck my fancy, and I determined to remain there, at all events for some time to come. I intended to proceed to the eastern frontier when I had seen a little more of the town and its environs.

The Malays are great fishermen, and well are their toils rewarded. Perhaps there is no spot on the globe more plentifully supplied with fish than the Bank of Agulhas, which extends along the whole southern coast of Africa. A list of

thirty-three varieties of the finny tribe, most commonly found there, lies before me at this moment; but the names (few of which have been Anglicized) would puzzle the reader, though they might help to fill a page if I were book-making. The best-esteemed is *snoek*, a very excellent fish, caught off the south-western coast in great quantities. It is salted and exported to a considerable extent; but for neglecting the best and most obvious resources, commend me to the Cape Colony. I shall have to point out innumerable instances, *en passant*, in this work, and therefore I need not enumerate them here; but decidedly the "fish case" is a gross one. When the Cape Colony was discovered, the Newfoundland fisheries were unknown, or unheard of; yet they have in some years exported nine hundred and fifty thousand quintals of cod-fish! The Cape, I have no hesitation in saying, has a finer bank in the Agulhas, and a more plentiful supply of admirable fish; and yet the extent of her exports have never exceeded about eight thousand quintals in a year! In fact, as I said at the beginning of this paragraph, the Malays are great fishermen, but they are the only ones in the colony. It is difficult to assign a reason for this. You may take a boat, and let down your net at any one point off the

coast, and you are certain to draw it up full of excellent fish. There are no dues, no restrictions as to locality or season. The country produces enormous quantities of salt (to be noticed hereafter), and everything seems to combine to force the importance of their fisheries upon the colonists. And yet they are well-nigh neglected.

Talking of fish brings me to speak of the fishermen. The Malays are decidedly the most respectable of the coloured races in South Africa. This I attribute mainly to the influence of their religion (the Mahommetan), which is certainly well adapted to a half-civilized race. It has two great merits,—it enforces cleanliness of person, and it forbids the use of ardent spirits. These virtues—cleanliness and temperance—are the very ones in which the other coloured tribes are mainly deficient. Many of them are Christians, nominally,—that is to say, they attend the chapels of the missionary station; but, notwithstanding their religion, they are filthy drunkards, almost to a man, and to a woman too. I hope I shall not be mistaken in these remarks. I trust no one will suppose that I impute these vices to any defects in our divine religion, to whose spirit and precepts they are in such direct opposition. But it must be borne in mind, that the injunc-

tions of the New Testament do not descend to the minutiæ of ordering ablutions, or regulating the diet of Christians. The duty, however, of its teachers is, in my humble opinion, to enforce these simple decencies of life on the savages they attempt to convert, even before they endeavour to teach the mysterious doctrines of their religion. They do not do so. They begin at the wrong end. They strive to make Christians, before they have made men, out of barbarians. The Mahometan religion, far short as it falls of our own beautiful system, has at least one merit of teaching and enforcing the ordinary decencies of life on its followers.

Many of the Malays are men of considerable property. Their principal occupations are fishing, carrying goods by wagon, breeding horses, and selling fruit. Some go into service, and they make excellent grooms. They seldom intermarry with other races, and they are reputed very jealous in regard to their women, who, however, do not wear the veil, or any other covering to their head or face. They have beautiful hair, which they bind up with large gold pins, and dress it with cocoa-nut oil. They are decidedly a very handsome race—some of the females especially.

Their religious festivals are very extraordinary,

and, I suppose, very grand; but the comic parts of them always struck me so forcibly (from some defect, perhaps, of my own organization), that their grandeur was quite lost to my mind. I went to one first in Cape Town. It was evening, and I was conducted into a large room, with a small space railed off for spectators. Candles were stuck in silver sconces, fastened to the walls in profusion, amid garlands of flowers innumerable. Round the room were several old Malays, squatting on mats, and dressed in gala costume, In the centre of the room a quantity of perfume was burning. Three or four younger Malays kept marching round the room, and they and the old gentlemen aforesaid kept up a sort of grunting, whining chorus, which at first I took to be indications of severe pain in the abdominal regions, but was afterwards informed that they were chanting sentences from the Koran. Suddenly the young gentlemen began to throw themselves about in the most gladiatorial attitudes, singing faster than ever. Thereupon the old gentlemen shouted much louder, as though the internal agonies had vastly increased. Then the young men stripped off their shirts, and I thought they were going to have a regular "set-to." My friend Jones irreverently cried "Go it!" and offered to

back the little one with the flat nose against the lot. But they were not going to box at all; they only danced, and jumped, and shouted, till they left little pools of sudorific exhalations on the floor. Then a boy came shouting awfully. Jones cried "Turn him out!" and at the same moment two of the young men seized the boy, and plunged a sharp instrument like a meat-skewer through his tongue—at least so it appeared,—and they led him round to the admiring spectators with the skewer projecting through his tongue. Jones pronounced it "too bad," and hinted that he should like to "punch the head" of the fellow that did it; but the boy looked quite happy and contented with his tongue on a skewer; so that no doubt there was some deception, which, however, defied our detection.

As soon as this interesting youth had departed, one of the young men took a dagger and plunged it into the fleshy part of his side, just above the hip, and then walked round and showed himself. There were a few drops of blood, apparently flowing from the wound, in which the dagger was left sticking. Jones informed him, gravely, that he would have a terrible "pain in the side," and offered to prescribe for him from a valuable recipe of his

grandmamma's. Another man thrust a skewer through his cheek, and came and showed himself also. Then some red-hot chains were brought in, and thrown over an iron beam, when another of the Malays seized them with his bare hands, and kept drawing them fast over the beams. All the while that these exhibitions were taking place, the Malays kept up their hideous shrieking of the Koran sentences, all of them shouting together, and louder and louder the more horrible the experiment was being tried. The noise, the sight, the weapons, and the red-hot chains, together, formed a scene bordering on the diabolical; except that there was such evident jugglery in the whole affair, and the plate was so constantly handed round for money, while the comments of my cockney friend were so absurd, that the ludicrous predominated greatly over the horrible. What the meaning of it all was I have not the remotest idea, nor did I ever meet any one who could explain it.

Simon's Town is about twenty miles from Cape Town. It is the naval station of the colony. I determined to drive over and look at it. Halfway on the road stands an inn, which has on its sign-board the following boastful inscription,—

" In questa casa troverete,
Tout ce que vous pouvez souhaiter ;
Vinum, panem, pisces, carnes,
Coaches, chaises, horses, and harness."

It is a little low house, looking very unlikely to afford the accommodation thus offered. I entered it, and was soon in conversation with the landlord, Farmer Peck. The old fellow was a regular character, as his sign-board would intimate, and his peculiarity of manner struck me much more than it would have done a year later. He had not the least air of being obliged to you for your custom ; but, on the contrary, seemed to think himself a very benevolent fellow for keeping an inn for your accommodation. His household furniture was rough and plain enough, and yet he could produce a goodly show of plate, and rumour said he was " warm."

Speaking of Cape innkeepers, I must confess they are a most uncivil set of fellows. I once rode up to the best hotel in the Eastern Province. No ostler appeared when I entered the yard ; but the landlord, who was known to me by sight, was standing there, and surveyed me with the utmost coolness, but without the least offer to aid me, or call a servant. The following dialogue ensued.

Myself.—I beg your pardon, I think you're the landlord ?

Innkeeper.—Yes (with a grunt).

Myself.—Will you send the ostler ?

Innkeeper.—He's busy getting my gig ready.

Myself.—Do you mean to say there is no one to help a traveller arriving at your house ?

Innkeeper.—What do you mean ? Don't you know how to unsaddle your own horse !

Myself.—Yes ; but I don't do it when I have a servant.

Innkeeper.—Why didn't you bring one, then ?

Myself.—Because I expected to find one here !

Innkeeper.—Mine have got enough to do to attend to *my* horses.

Myself.—Pray don't you keep an inn ? (Innkeeper grunts "yes.") Then I think you are a devilish saucy fellow to talk in this style to a customer.

Innkeeper.—You can go, if you don't like it ! (The blackguard knows there is not another house of accommodation within twenty miles.)

Myself.—But I don't *choose* to go. I am going to remain here, and I am going to teach you civility.

Innkeeper sneers. I stable my own horse, and supply him with forage. I walk into the house, get hold of a pen and ink, and write to the resident magistrate of the district, who is a friend of

mine, an account of the above interview, and express my hope that he will not again grant a license to this fellow. I then walk into mine host's room, read him the letter that I have written, and tell him to send me in some dinner, before I go out to post it. The dinner comes excellently served, and I am well waited upon. Every attention, the most minute, is shown to me; my horse is well-fed and well-groomed; and my bill is very moderate. I *don't* post the letter, and the landlord is so polite whenever I visit his house henceforth, that all the other visitors stare in amazement.

I was disappointed with my visit to Simon's Town. The road for the last ten miles is very sandy, barren, and uninteresting, while the town is a little straggling place not worth looking at. The harbour, however, though small, is beautifully secure, being perfectly land-locked. It is a small bay *within* False Bay, the largest arm of the sea on the coast.

Baron Von Ludwig is the police-magistrate in Cape Town, and a highly respectable citizen also. But the Baron is a public benefactor to the town in a different capacity. He has a most perfect botanical garden, which, next to the library, is the best "show" of the place. The trouble and

expense it must have cost him to make so beautiful a garden, containing specimens of every botanical curiosity of every clime, must have been very great. Moreover, he throws it open to the public two or three times a week. I shall not attempt to describe it; but I mention it here, as an instance of a private individual performing what the government neglected most shamefully. During the Dutch possession of the colony, a government garden was supported; and it is thus described by Sir William Temple. "It contained nineteen acres, was of an oblong figure, and divided into four quarters by long cross walks, ranged with all sorts of orange trees, limes, and citrons. Each of these four quarters is planted with the trees, fruits, flowers, and plants that are native and proper to each of the four quarters of the globe, so that, in this one enclosure are to be found the several gardens of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. There could not be, to my mind, a greater thought of a gardener, nor a nobler idea of a garden, nor better suited or chosen for the climate." Premare said of it, "It is one of the most beautiful spectacles in the world." All this is gone! And why? Because a government, which pays five thousand pounds a-year to an old military martinet to misgovern the colony,

could not afford the expense of two or three gardeners to preserve it from decay. Baron Von Ludwig puts them to shame.

Wherever the English go, from snowy Canada to burning India, they export with them two amusements — cricket and horse-racing. Both flourish greatly in all parts of the Cape Colony. The races of Cape Town were now approaching.

One magnificent morning, having hired an animal, I rode slowly out to the race-course at Green Point. The road was crowded with vehicles and horses proceeding there; and for variety I would back them against the road to Epsom on the Derby day. Let us watch them. First goes a buggy with a well-stepping chestnut, three-parts Arab breed, and driven by a young man who seems to say, "Hang me if you can find much fault with this turn-out—or the driver!" He is an officer of the garrison. Behind him is a man on horseback. The man is a huge, broad-shouldered, dark-skinned fellow, with a broad-rimmed wide-awake hat, a brown moleskin jacket, a pair of brown or yellow tanned leather "inexpressibles," and shoes of the same materials, stitched together with thongs. In his mouth is a short black pipe, in his hand a hunting-whip. He rides a horse about fourteen hands high,

which he calls a red-schimmel, but which you would term a roan. You can see that it has never been groomed in its life, and probably never tasted corn. It has a ewe-neck, and a goose-rump; but its legs are all right—its eye is clear and bright. It shuffles along at a queer ambling pace, but it moves as easily as a wherry on a river: it will keep up that pace for as many hours as you please.

The man is a thorough-bred Dutch boer, and he rode that horse sixty miles yesterday from his farm, though it looks as fresh as ever now, and will carry him back again to-morrow.

Next follows a long horse wagon, with the canvas tent-cover removed, drawn by eight horses (smart active little animals), which are driven all in hand, by a Malay in his Chinese pagoda-hat, and with a long whip, with a bamboo handle, in his hand. What gay colours, pretty faces, and merry voices inside the wagon! There are twelve or thirteen men, women, and children there—all Malays. The waists of the women are made just under their arms, like our mothers' forty years ago; but they look very charming notwithstanding. What eyes, and what hair, and what coquettish looks! Spirit of Mahomet, are these thy followers?

An open barouche-and-four. These are the last-

imported fashions from London and Paris. The milliners have had work enough to turn out all that finery for the race-day. There are none but the fair sex there: they are beautiful girls, truly; but two of them have a tinge of dark colour in their skins, which tells of mixed blood. Who are they? It is Mademoiselle Caroline and ——, but you had better not ask.

Twelve oxen and a lumbering old South African wagon. A stout, happy-looking old boer and his *frouw* and *kinderen* (or wife and children in plain English). Look at the good dame in her wonderful bonnet, which is formed of a single piece of oblong pasteboard, covered with a piece of Manchester print, and bent into a Quakeress-like form, with a long curtain hanging down behind. See those saucy little rascals, her children, enjoying the novel sight. They have come with that wagon, and that span of oxen, a whole month's journey to bring some butter and hides to market, and to see the races.

Here's a dust! Four horses, an open carriage, half-a-dozen mounted orderlies, a blaze of uniforms, an old gentleman, with one arm, in the carriage, dressed in a brilliant costume and glittering with stars and orders, and wearing a cocked

hat. A dozen more brilliantly attired gentlemen on first-rate cattle, with cocked hats and white feathers, and clanking sabres, and an occasional moustache. Make way for the governor and his staff.

What next? Two jet-black savages with no covering but a bullock's hide each, with brass curtain-rings round their arms, and beads round their necks, and ear-rings in their ears. Each with a great knobbed stick in his hand, and each riding an ox! There is a ring through the animal's nose, as we put it through a pig's in England; and to each side of the ring is fastened a thong of leather, and these serve for reins; and with them the Fingoe guides his steed, and bowls along at a brisk trot as proud of his appearance as of his ox-manship.

Then there are the crowds on foot of every class and every colour; English and Dutch, Malays, Hottentots, Negroes, Mozambiques, Griquas, half-castes, two or three Chinese, and several Hindoos. There are young apprentices, looking as Cockneyfied as if just sent forth from Cheapside; old English gentlemen complaining of the heat; Dutch damsels with dark eyes, and dark hair, rather languid looking; English lasses, with sunny tresses and brilliant complexions, gay

and smiling, and all the merrier for the bright sky above them.

Such is a faint picture of the road to a South African race-course.

The races themselves were very fair—much better than many or most of the inferior meetings in England. The jockeys were nearly all coloured men or boys, while the flesh and fat of some of the horses bore indisputable evidence that there were no Scotts or Days in the land to train them.

Between Table Mountain and the Lion's Head is a ravine or pass leading to Camp's Bay, a very pretty spot. The walk through this ravine is exceedingly interesting from the variety of strange shrubs and bushes growing there, but still more from the appearance of the rocks. A very poor geologist, such as myself, can easily perceive that the ocean once flowed through it. The site of Cape Town was all under water; and, indeed, carrying one's researches still further, the whole peninsula on which Table Mountain rests can be traced to have been an island.

In many other parts of the colony, far inland, and on lofty mountains, I have marked the signs of the ocean having once rolled where the eagle now builds her nest; or rather, I should say

that I have seen convincing proofs that those lofty points were once under water; but whether the sea has receded from them, or whether they have been hurled up by the internal convulsions of the earth—whether, in fact, they are of aqueous or igneous formation—is still a vexed question among the best Cape geologists; and though my own opinion inclines to the latter theory, I state it in all humility, and with all deference to more learned opponents.

Eight years ago it was thought that the colony was perfectly without fossils. Two gentlemen were riding together in the eastern province, between Graham's Town and Fort Beaufort, and chatting on their favourite pastime—geology. Suddenly one of them pulled up and dismounted, began to examine a portion of the rocks they were passing, and exclaimed—

"B——, I have discovered a fossil."

"Very like a whale, no doubt," answered B——.

"Come and look," was the rejoinder.

With an intimation that he believed it was "only a sell," B—— reluctantly complied. As soon as he had looked where his friend pointed, he felt considerably puzzled; for, although a very clever fellow, he was terribly short-sighted, and

had no spectacles with him. The other still swore it was a fossil, and B—— still doubted; but they managed to detach the specimen, which B—— pocketed and took home to examine. The next day his friend received from him the following note:—

"My dear F——,

"After a minute and careful examination of our 'specimen,' I pronounce it an undoubted fossil—the small leg-bone of a jackal, which has probably been embedded for the space of two months!!

"Yours ever,

"W. B——."

Nevertheless several fossils of great value have since been discovered, and specimens forwarded to the Geological Society of London. The first discoverer was a Mr. Bain, a civil engineer of great reputation in the colony, who has formed some excellent roads over the most impracticable looking places the eye ever rested on. Every traveller there is indebted to him; but I believe he has had neither honours nor rewards for his accomplishments. Why should he? He has never helped to slaughter the Queen's enemies—

he is a civilian—an insuperable barrier to distinction in the colonies of Great Britain.

I had now got tired of Cape Town and its environs, and I was, moreover, anxious to become better acquainted with the colony and its resources; so I determined to start for the eastern province—decidedly the most "go-a-head" part of South Africa.

Looking out for a ship bound for Algoa Bay, I pitched on the "Jim Crow," a schooner of some one hundred and fifty tons, in which I engaged something, facetiously termed a "state cabin;" though if a man kept a Newfoundland dog in a kennel of the same size, I believe he might be fined under Martin's Act, if duly prosecuted by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

With a sigh for some of the warm-hearted friends I was leaving, and a glance at my old wreck, I sailed from Cape Town in a splitting "north-easter."

CHAPTER IV.

FOUL WEATHER.—"JIM CROW" UNDER BARE POLES.—FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF PORT ELIZABETH.—A JOLLY PORT-CAPTAIN.—LANDING.—DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN.—CHRISTMAS FARE AND WEATHER.—RIVAL RESPECTABILITIES.—EXCLUSIVISM.—THE DUTCH.—BARBAROUS LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT THE CAPE.—AN UNPOPULAR GOVERNOR.—GETTING UP AN ADDRESS.—A HUNGRY AUDIENCE.—A SLIGHT REBUFF.—AN AIDE-DE-CAMP'S OPINION OF GOVERNMENT AND "THAT SORT OF THING."—RAPID INCREASE OF PORT ELIZABETH.—PUBLIC BUILDINGS.—THE FORT.—SURF, AND THE SURF-BOATS.—WHALING ESTABLISHMENT.—"CATCHING A WHALE."—BUYING "WHITE KIDS."—A BALL.—MY *vis-d-vis*.

I AM always unlucky with regard to weather at sea, being what the sailors call a regular "Jonas." We had a tremendous gale the night after we left Table Bay: every inch of canvas was taken in and stowed, and we scudded before the wind under bare poles, for it was fortunately blowing from the right quarter. Our only danger was from the chance of shipping a sea right through the stern. It certainly looked like a race between the huge waves and the *Jim Crow*, in which the latter barely won by a neck. Our rate of sailing was wonderful, for we performed the

voyage from Table to Algoa Bay in seventy hours —faster than the steamer now does it, nine times out of ten—though for four-and-twenty hours we had not a stitch of sail set. Poor *Jim Crow!* I saw thee, some two or three years later, driven on shore in one of those tremendous south-east gales, and knocked to pieces in the surf of Algoa Bay.

As we approached land, and saw the little town of Port Elizabeth before us, I certainly thought I had never beheld so miserable looking a place. Huge sand-hills, extending in all directions—little white houses, with glaring red roofs, and not the vestige of a tree near them, dotted about among the sand-hills—a heavy rolling surf, and about three ships in a bay capable of holding the navy of half the world—all this gave an air of desolation to the ugliest looking shore that man's eye ever rested on. I don't wonder at Bartholomew Diaz, the man who first rounded the Cape, sailing into Algoa Bay, and landing on a little rocky island in it, in preference to the mainland; for if the latter looked as inhospitable then as now, the great navigator may have reasonably felt a distaste to set foot on it.

The port-boat came alongside, with the fattest of port-captains in it, who went through one or

two ceremonies with the captain, the principal of which appeared to be tasting the grog; and then the captain and I, the solitary passenger, accompanied him on shore. The first glance—nay, the second and the third—by no means improved my previous impressions of the place. I thought it a villanous looking little hole, though I afterwards learnt to change my opinion, and to feel a great affection for the town.

Port Elizabeth is the only town in Algoa Bay, and, consequently, the seaport of the eastern province. It contains about three to four thousand inhabitants, and ranks as the third town in the colony, Graham's Town being the second. It consists of one long, broad, straggling, street, with houses of all sizes in it, and not one like the other, except in having a stuccoed front. They are built principally of sandstone found in the neighbourhood, and bricks. The land round the town is completely and wretchedly barren, except in one spot where there is a little valley with a brook—dignified with the name of a river—running through it. In this valley are two or three houses, and something like a garden or two. The valley itself contains some natural beauties of scenery. It is, however, quite unseen from

the town, which has only the sea to redeem it from being the ugliest place on earth.

Five miles from the town is a homestead, called Cradock's Place, or Town, the property of a Mr. Chase. This gentleman has an excellent house, and a beautiful garden of very considerable extent, well laid out, and well cared for, and planted with fruits and flowers from every corner of the earth; so that the place is really the best of its kind in the eastern province of the colony. Here I spent my first Christmas in South Africa, and ate my turkey and plum-pudding at Mr. Chase's hospitable board. The day was fine, warm—or, rather, very hot—and bright, the fare excellent, and the host just the man to make a Christmas dinner go off merrily. May he live to enjoy many another!

The good folks at Port Elizabeth entertain a considerable jealousy of those at Cape Town, by whom they are in turn regarded as rather promising mushrooms. It is exceedingly amusing for a stranger, or one who has not yet become mixed up with coteries in his adopted country, to listen to the little diatribes of various provinces and townships against each other.

"Did you like Cape Town?" I was asked.

"Very much," I replied.

"But the people?"

"I found them remarkably kind and hospitable," I added.

"But such a very mixed set; don't you think so?" pursued the inquiring lady.

Now the very idea of exclusivism in colonial society had never for an instant struck me. I knew that the soldiers were apt to give themselves dandified airs there as everywhere else (poor fellows!), and to fancy themselves vastly superior to the trading community around them; though in what the superiority consists it would be difficult to say, unless it be that the son is better than the father; and, therefore, the red-coated son of a sugar-baker a greater man than his progenitor. But I found that the English of Port Elizabeth entertain a very mean notion of the Dutch of Cape Town; a very unreasonable prejudice, certainly, for the latter are the most wealthy and respectable, and not the least intelligent part of the community, and, except in not being able to speak their own language, are deficient in few things. As for their language, it bears the same analogy to the pure Dutch of Holland, as the worst Canadian French does to the pure French of Paris; while the language, or *patois*, spoken by the boers and the coloured

people throughout the colony, is something so abominably bad, that I once saw a thorough-bred Hollander almost unable to understand a single word of it.

The governor, too, appeared to be very unpopular with the good folks of Port Elizabeth, and I was soon let into the cause of this. It appeared that some time previously, his excellency had made a tour through the colony, in the course of which he received addresses from the inhabitants of the various towns he rested at. One fine day he landed at Port Elizabeth. Expecting his arrival, twenty or thirty gentlemen of the town had been for some hours engaged in manufacturing an address, which was to be something out of the ordinary way. There were one or two men there with a tolerably lofty idea of their own graphic powers—men deeply read in Lindley Murray and Burke on the French Revolution. At length the address was ready, and written out in a fine bold hand. A deputation was elected, and an auctioneer, being, *ex officio*, the most eloquent man in the place, was selected to head it. The governor landed—surrounded by his staff—all looking very sea-sick and hungry. The deputation approached—the governor bowed—the *aides-de-camp* twirled their moustachios, and longed

for breakfast—the auctioneer began the address. Heaven forbid that I should trouble the reader with its contents, or even a summary of them! It was all about roads, and harbours, and Kafirs, and emigration, and told the governor exactly what he ought to do. Hereupon the governor, thrusting the address into his pocket, told the deputation he was very much obliged to them, but flattered himself he could govern the colony without their assistance, and wished them a very abrupt good morning; while an *aide-de-camp*, stroking his chin, audibly expressed his "wonder what tinkers and dealers in soap could know about government, and that sort of thing?" and so they went to breakfast.

Great was the indignation when the townsfolk learnt how their deputation had been treated. Perhaps the "unkindest cut" of all was the *aide-de-camp's* designation of them; especially as a satirical gentleman from India had, only a little while before, described their town as a place—

"Where ladies are not, and where gentlemen are scarce,"

though he afterwards declared that the printer had made a mistake, and should have put a comma before the word "scarce;" which reinstated him in the ladies' favour.

However, Port Elizabeth is a very thriving

little place, and its inhabitants a very hospitable set of people. In 1820, when the first emigrants arrived in Algoa Bay, there were about thirty inhabitants on this spot, and three houses. In 1845 (twenty-five years later), there were more than three thousand inhabitants, and above three hundred houses, besides churches, chapels, a commercial hall and library, a capital pile of commissariat buildings, and a custom-house. The imports for the same year exceeded 120,000*l.*, and the exports 150,000*l.*; and all this, be it remembered, without any extraneous aid from the mother country; for, except in sending out incompetent officials, getting up wars with the Kafirs, and grumbling at paying the expense of them, mismanaging the people, and forbidding the application of the colonial revenue to really useful purposes (such as jetties, breakwaters, roads, &c.), England has done next to nothing for the Cape colony.

I have omitted two most important edifices at Port Elizabeth. One is a pyramid, erected to the memory of Lady Anna Maria Donkin, wife of a former governor of the Cape, and commonly called "Donkin's Folly." The other is Fort Frederick, a block-house, perched on a hill above the town, mounting six scaly guns (which are

unfit for use), on walls which would inevitably tumble to pieces with the vibration of "letting off a gun." I would undertake to reduce Port Elizabeth, under the teeth of its fort, with a twelve-gun brig!

The surf in Algoa Bay is nearly as bad as that of Madras; but they adopt a different system of landing goods and passengers.

A quantity of large flat-bottomed boats are kept, capable of containing three tons, and a thick rope is carried from each ship to the shore, passing through two rings—one at the stem and one at the stern—in the boat. The boat is manned by five or six Fingoes, who keep hauling at the rope, and thus pull the boat from the ship to the shore, and *vice versâ*. No surf can upset these broad, punt-shaped boats, and they can be worked at any time except when a very heavy south-east wind, setting right into the bay, and raising a tremendous swell, would risk breaking the rope, without which the boat is useless and helpless. When the boat grounds in the breakers, the Fingoes, who are very slightly encumbered with clothing, jump out, and the passengers jump on to their backs, or into their arms—according to their sex—and are carried on to dry land by them. The ladies don't much fancy this method

of landing. A whale boat can spin through the surf, but any ordinary craft is nearly certain to be upset by it.

Talking of whale boats reminds me of the whaling establishment in Algoa Bay. By what instinct these monsters of the deep ascertain the settlement of man on the shores they frequent, it would be difficult to say. But that they do so, and that they then comparatively desert such coasts, is undoubted. Where one whale is now seen off the south-eastern coast of Africa, twenty were seen in former times, when the inhabitants of the country were few. It is the same in New Zealand, and every other whale-frequented coast. Nevertheless, the whaling establishment at Port Elizabeth is still kept up, and with good reason. One single whale per annum will pay all the expenses and outgoings of its maintenance; every other whale taken in the course of a year is a clear profit.

The value of a whale depends, of course, upon its size; the average is from three to six hundred pounds. The establishment in Algoa Bay consists of a stone-built house, for the residence of the foreman, with the coppers and boiling-houses attached; a wooden boat-house, in which are kept three or four whale-boats, with all the lines

and tackle belonging to them; and a set of javelins, harpoons, and implements for cutting up the whales' carcases. Then there are a boat's crew of six picked men, besides the cockswain and the harpooner. There are seldom above two or three whales taken in the course of a year; occasionally not even one.

The appearance of a whale in the bay is known immediately, and great is the excitement thereby caused in the little town of Port Elizabeth. It is a sudden and unexpected gala, got up for the entertainment of the inhabitants, with nothing to pay. The beach is crowded, and so are all the windows looking on to the sea.

They are preparing yonder to launch the boat through the surf. Let us jump in and see the sport. Tackle and men are ready in a twinkling. We screw ourselves into the stern-sheets. Six weather-beaten, muscular tars are at work at the oars, and there in the bows stands the harpooner, preparing his tackle; by his side is a boy with a bucket. Coils of line lie at their feet, with harpoons attached to them, and two or three spears or javelins.

"Pull away, boys; there she blows again!" cries the cockswain, and at each stroke the men almost lift the little craft out of the water. The

harpooner says nothing; he is a very silent fellow; but woe to the unlucky whale that comes within the whirl of his unerring harpoon!

Meantime our fat friend of the ocean is rolling himself about, as if such things as harpoons never existed; as if he were an infidel in javelins. We are approaching him—a dozen more strokes, and we shall be within aim. Yet the harpooner seems cool and unmoved as ever; he holds the harpoon, it is true, but he seems to grasp it no tighter, nor to make any preparation for a strike. He knows the whale better than we do—better than his crew. He has been a harpooner for thirty years, and has harpooned twenty-six whales in a single year with his own hand. He was right not to hurry himself, you see, for the whale has at last caught sight of us, and has plunged below the surface.

Now, however, the harpooner makes a scarcely perceptible sign to the cockswain. The cockswain says, "Give way, boys," scarcely above his breath, and the boat skims faster than ever over the waters. The harpooner's hand clutches more tightly the harpoon, and he slowly raises his arm; his mouth is compressed but his face is as calm as ever. A few yards a-head of us a wave seems to swell above the others—"whiz"

—at the very moment you catch sight of the whale's back again above the surface, the harpoon is in it eighteen inches deep hurled with the unerring aim of the silent harpooner.

The red blood of the monster gushes forth "incarnadining," as Macbeth says, the waves.

"Back water!" shouts the harpooner, as the whale writhes with the pain and flings his huge body about with force enough to submerge twenty of our little crafts at one blow. But he has plunged down again below the surface, and the pace at which he dives you may judge of by the wonderful rapidity with which the line attached to the harpoon runs over the bow of the boat. Now, too, you see the use of the boy who is bailing water from the sea in his bucket, and pouring it incessantly over the edge of the boat where the line runs, or in two minutes the friction would set fire to it.

You begin to think the whale is never coming back; but the crew know better. See, too, the line is running out more slowly every instant: it ceases altogether now, and hangs slackly over the boat's side. He is coming up exhausted to breathe again. There are a few moments of suspense, during which the harpooner is getting ready and poising one of the javelins. It is

longer, lighter, and sharper than the harpoon, but it has no line attached to it. The harpoon is to catch—the javelin to kill. Slowly the whale rises again, but he is not within aim.

"Pull again, boys!" while the lad is hauling in the line as fast as he can. We are near enough now. Again, a whiz—again another—and the harpooner has sent two javelins deep into the creature's body, while the blood flows fast. Suddenly the whale dashes forward. No need of pulling at the oars now. We are giving him fresh line as fast as we can; yet he is taking us through the water at the rate of twenty miles an hour at least. One would fancy that the harpoons and javelins have only irritated him, and that all the blood he has lost has diminished nothing of his strength. Not so; the pace slackens,—we are scarcely moving through the water.

"Pull again, boys!" and we approach; another deadly javelin pierces him. This time he seems to seek revenge. He turns and dashes towards us—what can save us from destruction?

"Back water!" cries the harpooner, while the cockswain, taking the hint at the same moment, with a sweep of his oar, the little boat performs a kind of curvet backwards, and the monster

has shot past us unharming, but not unharmed; the harpooner, cool as ever, has hurled another harpoon deep into him, and smiles half pityingly at his impotent rage which he knows full well bodes a termination of the contest. The red blood is spouting forth from four wounds, "neither as deep as a well, nor as wide as a church door," but enough to kill even a whale. He rolls over heavily and slowly; a few convulsive movements shake his mighty frame; then he floats motionless on the water, and the whale is dead.

Ropes are now made fast round him, and he is slowly towed away to shore, opposite to the whaling establishment. A crowd is collecting to see his huge body hauled up on to the beach, and to speculate on his size and value. In two days all his blubber is cut away and melting in the coppers; vultures are feeding on his flesh, and men are cleansing his bones. In two months barrels of his oil are waiting for shipment to England. The fringe-work which lined his mouth, and which we call whalebone, is ready for the uses to which ladies apply it. His teeth, which are beautiful ivory, are being fashioned into ornaments by the turner; and his jaw-bones and his immense ribs are serving as land-marks on the different farms about the country,—a pur-

pose to which they are admirably adapted. Meanwhile our friend the harpooner and his crew are reposing on their laurels, and looking out for fresh luck; while the establishment is five hundred pounds the richer from this "catching a whale."

Shortly after my arrival at Algoa Bay, I had an invitation to a ball. Not having any "white kids," I strolled about the town, looking for a hosier's or glover's. There was not the slightest sign of such a shop in the place. I looked at every man's hands as he passed me; very few wore gloves, certainly; but some did, and I wondered where they got them. At last, in despair, I rushed into a shop where iron pots, birch brooms, Dutch cheeses, and sacks of rice and sugar seemed to be the principal commodities, and I asked where I could buy gloves?

"Here, sir," was the reply.

And accordingly I was served with a very respectable pair of white gloves, in a shop where coffee and hats, Chinese shawls and peg tops, knives and forks and salt butter,—in fact, everything—was sold.

In the evening I made my *entrée* at the ball, selected a partner in white muslin and corkscrew curls, for a quadrille, and took up a posi-

tion. There was something about the physiognomy of my *vis-à-vis*, the man, which struck me. Where the deuce had I seen that face before? He was smirking and smiling as if the recognition were mutual. Who could he be? At last I caught the fellow looking hard at my gloves. The thought flashed across me in an instant. It was the very man that sold me them across the counter three or four hours ago. And I was in the house of the fair one who talked sneeringly of mixed society! I burst out laughing, much to the discomfiture of my very bashful partner, to whom I had to apologize, and invent a very bad joke, which I vowed had just struck me. The worst of it was that, after all, she did not see the point of it.

CHAPTER V.

THE COUNTRY OF THE HOTTENTOTS.—SLIGHT SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE COLONY.—DIMINUTION OF THE NUMBER OF ABORIGINES.—CHARACTER OF THE HOTTENTOTS.—"UNPLEASANT" DOMESTICS.—THEIR LANGUAGE.—LEAVE PORT ELIZABETH.—SALT LAKES.—THEIR ORIGIN.—A ROAD-SIDE INN.—HORSES THAT WONT EAT CORN.—DINING ON HIPPOPOTAMUS.—SOUTH AFRICAN DELICACIES.—A BILL OF FARE FOR A WILDERNESS DINNER-PARTY.—ARRIVAL AT A SHEEP-FARM.—A MANSION.—A FARMER'S LIFE.—A MORAL LECTURE.—HUNTING A LEOPARD.—TAKING IT COOLLY.—HYENAS, ETC.—TOUGH CUSTOMERS.—BUSHMEN LUXURIES.—A LESSON TO GOURMANDS.

I SUPPOSE I need scarcely inform the reader, that the Cape Colony was the country of the Hottentots. And yet it may not be superfluous to remind him of such being the case, because an idea seems very prevalent among the less informed, that the English have encroached on the territories of the Kafirs. Nothing can be more untrue. There is not an inch of the Cape Colony that ever belonged to the Kafirs.

The first colony planted at the Cape was by the Dutch, in 1652, under Van Riebeck, a great botanist. On entering into possession of his new

territory, the worthy Hollandor issued a proclamation, enjoining kindness to the aborigines, and prescribing that, "should they be detected in theft, they should on no account, without his previous knowledge and consent, be pursued, beaten, or even looked upon with anger;" that, "any European who ill-uses, beats, or pushes any of the natives, be he in the right or in the wrong, shall be punished with fifty lashes;" and, that "every friendship and kindness should be shown to them."

Three years afterwards, a treaty between the Aborigines and the Dutch gave to the latter an extent of three Dutch miles round the original fort; ten years more added Saldanha Bay and Hottentot Holland; and in 1672, two contracts with the Hottentot chiefs, signed on the 19th of April, and the 5th of May, witnessed the sale in full, perpetual and hereditary property, of all the lands around the Cape. The consent of the chiefs, and their contentment with the price paid, was testified by the members of the Cape government, and by the admiral of the fleet, as supreme commissioner; and the purchase appears as complete as that concluded between William Penn and the North Americans. In all such transactions between such parties, the advantage must be on the

side of the civilized. The prime cost of the articles delivered by Penn may have borne the same proportion to the value of Pennsylvania in its present improved condition, as did the tobacco, beads, brandy, and other trifles, to the value of the land around the Cape at the present day.

As years rolled on, the industrious Dutch colonists spread themselves over the country, till, in 1786, the eastern frontier of the colony was fixed where it has ever since remained, at the Great Fish River. Beyond, is the country of the Kafirs; but that country never extended a yard on the Colonial side of the river.

That the race of Hottentots has greatly diminished since the country was first taken possession of by the Dutch, there can be no doubt; but it was not by the cruelty of the colonists. Brandy and disease (principally the small-pox, which is indigenous in a most frightful form) were the chief exterminators. Nay, even in the present day, when the Hottentots have every right that is enjoyed by Europeans, they are diminishing rapidly. Such is ever the case. Wherever the foot of civilization treads, the native tribes melt away.

I never knew a Hottentot who had acquired property, though I have known every other class

of coloured people who have done so. A Hottentot is the most improvident, lazy animal on the face of the earth. Secure of a livelihood and good wages at any time, in a land where labour is the great want, he will work for a month, and as soon as he has pocketed his wages, leave his master, and be drunk while he has a solitary sixpence left. He is a living paradox; a drunkard and a thief, and yet one that can practise abstinence, and never rob his master. Sometimes you may trust him with anything of any value, while in your service, and he will not "pick and steal." After he has left you, he will as soon appropriate your Wellingtons (if he calls to see his successor in office) as wear his own shoes. He is the dirtiest fellow on earth, and will neither clean your room, your boots, nor your knives and forks, unless you are eternally driving him to his work; yet he will wash his hands with the utmost care before he touches the food he is preparing for your dinner, though he has the greatest natural antipathy to the contact of cold water; and if he wears any linen at all, never changes it till it is worn out and in rags. He is consequently by no means a pleasant valet, nor are the women of his race by any means agreeable as cooks or housemaids. Unless your

olfactory nerves are unusually obtuse, it is advisable never to go into any room which a Hottentot damsel has been putting in order, for at least half-an-hour after her departure.

The Hottentots all speak Dutch; for their own original tongue (the most hideous language in the world) is scarcely understood by any of them. Those who speak English are few, though they all understand a little of it. They are the general servants of the colony, both farm and domestic, at least in all the eastern districts. Their wages are generally from eighteen to twenty-five shillings a month, with rations of two pounds of bread, and one pound of meat per diem, besides coffee, sugar, tobacco, &c. As for asking for a character when taking a man-servant, no master or mistress ever thought of such a thing. They make up their minds, as a matter of course, to find him, if a man, something of a thief, and very much of a drunkard; and if a woman, the same and something else into the bargain.

Wishing to have a little practical experience of the delights of sheep-farming, I accepted the invitations of several kind friends, and joined a party of three others going up the country. Our travelling equipage was simple enough; a horse apiece, which carried a little valise of clean

clothes, besides its rider. I was mounted on a very queer-looking animal, who shuffled along at the easiest pace in the world, but about every quarter of an hour, apparently with the idea of not letting me imagine myself too comfortable, he would make a terrible stumble, with his nose almost on the ground, and shoot forward with tremendous force. How the deuce he escaped coming right down, I cannot tell; but I was informed that he had never fallen in his life, though he had stumbled in the same style ever since he was first ridden. It was a particularly unpleasant habit. Cape horses in general are stumblers, probably from the very rough, uneven ground they have to travel over, and from the shuffling pace they are made to go at.

Some short distance from Port Elizabeth, are the salt pans. They have often been described I believe; but I will just devote a few lines to them. They are small lakes with a broad margin of salt round them, looking exactly like snow. This salt is raked up into hillocks, and then carted and carried away in sacks, and supplies the whole colony. The origin of these singular lakes has never been accounted for satisfactorily. The supposition of oceanic connection is untenable, from the circumstance of the great eleva-

tion at which the lakes are found; and in fact they are discovered beyond the Orange River, three hundred miles from the nearest coast. Saliferous plants are very common in Africa, and some have imagined that the continual deposits of some of these vegetable productions, may be the cause of the existence of the salt pans. But then there are other hollows in the immediate neighbourhood of the pans, which hold perfectly fresh and sweet water. The most reasonable supposition seems to be, that there are large beds of rock-salt below these pans, and that the rains of winter descend through the soil, and reach the fossil, by which they are saturated, and, evaporating during the hot weather, form the crust collected on the bed or floor of the pan. No one, however, has ever practically tested the truth of this supposition by boring, nor are they likely to do so while the supply of salt continues so abundant on the surface.

The salt lakes look extremely pretty amid the dark foliage by which they are surrounded. The want of water is the principal defect in a South African landscape, both picturesquely and actually.

We rode on five-and-thirty miles without halting, till we came to Sunday's river, on the banks

of which are two inns. Entering one of them, we sat down to refresh ourselves, having treated our horses to some corn, an unwonted luxury to them.

The boers of South Africa never give their horses any other food than grass. I was once called out of a little road-side inn, where I was taking "mine ease," to see some horses that would not eat corn! A jolly old boer was there with three regular South African horses, to whom, in the generosity of his heart, he was tendering, for the first time in their lives, a mess of forage The nags sniffed and looked about very suspiciously, raked the corn about with their noses, blew it right and left, and then, with an air of ineffable contempt for such effeminate luxuries, turned away without deigning to touch it, and began grazing. My own nag came up to see the fun, and being a civilized and very sensible animal, he immediately "walked into" the corn, and made very short work of it.

"Well, landlord, what can you give us? we're very hungry."

"Eggs and bacon, or mutton—or, I'll tell you what," said the landlord, with a smile, "I've had a little present given me—it's a nice bit of zee-koe-spek" (sea-cow, *alias* hippopotamus pork).

"Let's have some, by all means."

It came, and remarkably good it was.

I trust the reader will sympathize with me when I tell him that I cannot look at the punchy little hippopotamus in the Regent's Park without thinking of the delicious pork he would make—*dairy-fed*, too, by-the-bye. This I can affirm, that I never tasted nicer pork in my life than that same piece of sea-cow flesh. How very absurd it appears for people to eat nothing but beef and mutton and pork all over the globe—as if every foreign country did not contain plenty of other animals fit for slaughter and diet, besides oxen, sheep, and pigs! Ask any hunter in South Africa, from Gordon Cumming down to any regular trader over the colonial boundary, whether buffalo steaks, when young, are not the finest in the world, whether a baked elephant's foot is not better than a stewed calf's head, whether a wild peacock is not as good as a tame turkey? Should any sportsman, emulous of the deeds of the mighty hunter I have mentioned, be thinking of emigrating to South Africa, to pass his time in the desert amid the pleasant companionship of lions, leopards, and hyenas, I would strongly recommend him the following bill of fare for his first dinner-party in the wilderness—and I pledge my word he will find every dish excellent.

First course.

Tortoise soup.

Crab. Lion fish. } Found in the rivers.

Second course.

Flank of Quagga.

Baked Elephant's foot. Fricassee of Porcupine.

Buffalo steaks.

Ragout of Earth-hog's leg. Spring-bok tendons.

Spare-rib of young Hippopotamus.

Third course.

Omelette Soufflé of Ostrich egg.

Wild Peacock. Quails.

Cape Smoke is the name applied to brandy distilled in the colony from peaches. I can't say I liked it at all; though it is the universal liquor of the Hottentots. I swallowed some, however, on this occasion, and we started again. Fifteen miles more brought us to our destination. We approached a little, low, wattle-and-daub hut, rudely thatched over, and bearing a very unattractive appearance. My friend was a great breeder of horses,* but it struck me that if he built no better stables than these, he was not over particular as to his nags' lodgings. He pulled up,

* From one of the latest accounts from the Cape, I learn that the whole of this man's valuable stud has been swept away by the Kafirs, and that he himself received two bullet-wounds in pursuing the marauders. Yet we are told that the Cape farmers like a Kafir war!

whipping off fifty or sixty curs, who were all yelping and barking round us, and who seemed able (and willing, too) to devour me and my horse on the instant. A more villanous-looking set of mongrels I never saw—though I saw plenty as bad afterwards. I imitated my friend, by laying about me right and left with my hunting-whip, to clear a space, and then dismounted, while a Hottentot led away our horses.

"Come in," cried my friend, diving his head into the low doorway by our side.

I did as I was told, and saw—*not* a stable, but a room—*the* room, in fact; for there was no other, though a portion of it was partitioned off at one end to form a bed-room! And so it appeared that the very place I had been mentally abusing as a very bad stable was my host's own mansion! the dwelling-house of a man who had two or three thousand sheep, three hundred cattle, a hundred and fifty horses, and about eight thousand acres of land! Verily this is *roughing it* with a vengeance, thought I.

And yet such is the style of residence of nearly every bachelor farmer in the colony. No man thinks of having a decent house over his head unless he is going to be married. As soon as he "pops the question," and is answered in the

affirmative, he cuts down a quantity of timber, sends off for carpenters and brickmakers, and knocks up a respectable habitation in three months. It is true that he *might* do it before being married, and at little expense; but he would be rated mad or a "spoon" if he thought of lodging himself much better than a Hottentot, in the days of his bachelorhood.

Of all lazy lives, there is not one to equal that of a sheep-farmer. An "exquisite" in London, or a *flâneur* in Paris, is a hardworking animal, compared to him. They have *something* to do—at all events, they must wash and dress—a sheep-farmer does neither; or at least very seldom. He ought to count his sheep as they leave the pens (or kraal), in the morning about ten o'clock, and again when they come home about six; but he seldom does even this. He turns out of bed about eleven, huddles on a pair of trousers, with the shirt he slept in, thrusts his feet into a pair of shoes, pulls a wide-awake hat over his head, and his toilet is complete. He then sticks a short pipe into his mouth, loiters about the homestead, and talks to Hottentots, not *more* lazy than himself, from the simple reason that that were impossible, takes a cup of coffee, and perhaps a chop, smokes and dozes away the whole day, looks

at the sheep as they come home in the evening, "slangs" the herds, eats mutton again, and calls it "dinner," smokes again, and *drinks* "smoke," pulls off his shoes, hat, and nether garments, and turns in again to snooze till eleven the next day, and then gets up and goes through the same process once more.

The only times when this state of existence is varied are, when a wolf (hyena) makes a midnight attack on his flock, and at shearing time. On the former occasion, he will spring up with alacrity, load his gun, and give chase to the robber for any distance. He will track him all the next day, and ride half over the country to collect his scattered flock. At shearing-time he *must* work, or his servants will not. Moreover, it is difficult to get a sufficient number of helpers, and so he must turn to work with his own hands. This he does with the more alacrity, because it is the wool, after all, which *pays*. As soon as he makes up his fleece, he can take it to his agent for shipment to England, and receive an advance on it at once.

It is strange how little the sheep-farmers sport in a country where game of all kinds is so plentiful. When the 7th Dragoon guards went to the Cape, they took with them a pack of foxhounds,

and hunted the jackal and nothing else. This was rather absurd in a country where every sort of game, from an elephant to a hare, from an ostrich to a quail, may be hunted or shot.

The sheep-farmer has a strong inducement, moreover, to sport for the supply of his own table. Tough mutton twice or three times every day of one's life, and cooked only in the most primitive style, is not the most tempting or luxurious food—especially where vegetables are rarities, with the exception of a little rice vilely boiled.

Not only do they neglect sporting, but, with fertile land around them, where every kind of fruit and vegetable will grow and thrive admirably, not one in a hundred cultivates a garden, or even grows a potato. No, no, my dear South African friends—some of you are hearty good fellows, to whom, from my soul, I wish all joy and prosperity ; but you are really a very lazy set of fellows. Cultivate gardens and your own minds (there is plenty of excellent soil of each sort), and raise goodly fruits in both of them.

But here am I sermonizing, while my friend, and a "Tottie," and a double-barrelled gun, are waiting for me to go and shoot a tiger. Forward then !

I may as well inform the reader, who may not happen to be well "up" in natural history, that there are no *tigers* in Africa at all. The leopard and the ounce there hold the brevet rank of "tiger." It was in search of one of these gentry, who had been heard growling about the neighbourhood, that we now sallied forth, accompanied by the before-mentioned troop of curs, to the number of about fifty—though I very much doubt whether the whole lot would have attacked the smallest leopard that ever climbed a tree.

Half an hour's walking brought us to the "bush," in the recesses of which our game was supposed to be lurking. The curs were yelping in all directions; but now it was a porcupine, now a jackal, now a hare, and now a monkey which attracted their sight or their noses. It looked a most impenetrable place, that same bush; and yet it was very clear that we should never get sight of our friend, unless we squeezed our way into it somehow or other. The Hottentot was used to it; besides, he wore leather "crackers," as the nether garments are termed in South Africa, and therefore felt little of the long thorns that were sticking themselves so pertinaciously into every part of my unfortunate person.

What an eternal chattering those long-tailed apes did make! It seemed as if they were savage with us for venturing into the regions of their abodes, and inclined to dispute our passage; but it was all *vox et præterea nihil.* They were arrant little cowards, and fled by hundreds as we approached. At length our fifty curs seemed to be all barking at the same place, and fixed on the same spot, as if brought to bay. This looked like business. There was an opening, too, in the bush, and a piece of greensward ahead of us. We saw the dogs there all collected round a tree; we emerged from the bush, and, looking up at the tree, saw the bright, and glossy, and spotted coat of our friend the leopard, who was looking half frightened, but more savagely, over a bough of the tree down at the pack of ignoble curs below him. As soon as he caught sight of us, he drew back his head.

"Now, old fellow, you shall have the first shot," said my friend to me; "we must walk much closer to the tree, so as to make sure of him. Just keep out of his spring, and that's all. Be quite cool, and fancy you are only aiming at a mark to try your shooting."

Very fine indeed, my good friend, thought I; but easier said than done. I don't consider my-

self a coward, by any means; but I am quite ready to admit that my heart beat a little stronger, and my pulse throbbed a little quicker just at that moment. I recollect that Charles O'Malley, when about to fight his first duel (Mr. Lever's heroes are generally in for half-a-dozen, at least), boasts that he can hit the stem of a wine-glass at twelve paces.

"Exactly," responds his friend Power; "but then, you see, Charley, the wine-glass has no pistol in his hand, pointed at *your head*." And so, let me remind the reader, it is a very different thing firing at an innocent partridge or a pheasant, and taking your first shot at a leopard, standing "just out of his spring."

However, I "screwed my courage to the sticking point," followed my friend, halted, raised my fowling-piece, took a steady aim, and let fly. A terrific roar of pain—a rush forwards to spring at us—another shot from my friend's gun—a heavy fall—and there lay at our feet a very handsome leopard stone-dead!

"That's *your* deed," cried I.

"Not at all," replied my friend; "your shot alone would have killed him, I believe; but any animal when hit, even with a death-wound, makes one momentary bound. He's a handsome

brute. Andreas, skin him," he added, to the Hottentot.

Master Andreas made short work of him and the curs, seeing that he was quite dead, pitched into his carcase with voracity. Are there no curs among our own race ?

The most troublesome of wild animals to the South African farmer is the hyena, or wolf, as he is always called in the colony. He is the great robber of the night. He is a cowardly brute, and never attacks a human being—indeed he very rarely makes his appearance till night-time, when the farmers and their herds are asleep. By day he continues in his hole in the earth. These wolf-holes, by the way, are so numerous, as to be very dangerous to a man galloping across the country. Many a time have I been hunting, and, when at full speed, my horse has put his foot into one of these holes, and come down like a shot, sending me two or three yards over his head. These wolves seemed to have diminished less before the spread of civilization than any other wild beast. The truth is, they are very fond of beef and mutton, and their dwelling-places are very secure ; and so they most sensibly remain where oxen and sheep are plenty. They are the toughest-skinned of any animals covered

with hair. I have seen a troop of dogs attacking one, and unable to draw blood; and a friend told me that he had frequently been unable to send a bullet into one at a distance from which he must have killed any ordinary animal.

Next in mischief is the wild-dog, which is only less destructive from being smaller. It can only attack sheep, while the hyena seizes oxen and horses into the bargain. Moreover, it is more easily killed by the curs, which are kept at every kraal. Wild *cats* play the deuce among the poultry and the lambs, but they don't venture on a full-sized sheep. There are no foxes, but their place is worthily supplied by the jackal, who is equally partial to a tender chicken or a Michaelmas goose, with his European relative.

The plain where I was now staying is called Quagga's Flat, from the thousands of quaggas that used formerly to be seen on it. Not one, however, has visited it for many a year. The springboks, the most graceful of antelopes, used to frequent the same plain in thousands. Few of them are ever seen there now, which is certainly a blessing to the farmer; for it is doubtful whether they were not more destructive than swarms of locusts. They would leave green plains arid deserts, when they came down on

them in those immense swarms. In one respect, perhaps, there was a little consolation in their visits not to be found in those of the locusts—you might shoot and eat some of them, while bushmen are, I believe, the only human beings, in these days, who feed on locusts; hence they suffer for their taste occasionally. In the year 1844 or 1845, some traveller in their country came upon whole kraals (or villages) which appeared at first to be deserted; but he found, on searching, that most of the inhabitants were still there—dead! There were great quantities of dead locusts in their huts, and the supposition was that they had died from eating them, either from some poison contained in them, or from a surfeit! Think of that, *gourmands* and *gourmets*.

While I am resting at a sheep-farm, I may as well give the reader some of the history and statistics of wool-growing in the colony; but for this purpose I will mend my pen and begin a fresh chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

ENERGY OF THE ENGLISH COLONISTS.—RAPID PROGRESS OF WOOL-GROWING.—TOWN-BRED FARMERS.—PROFITS OF SHEEP-FARMING.—GOING "ON TICK."—CAPE PHILOSOPHY.—AGRICULTURE —ITS DISAPPOINTMENTS AND ENEMIES.—RUST AND LOCUSTS.—CATTLE.—BUTTER.—A DESERTED MASTER.—PLEASANT SITUATION.—HORSE-BREEDING.—CHARACTERISTICS OF CAPE HORSES.—THEIR "SICKNESS."—SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE BREED.—A SOLITARY RIDE.—A REVERIE INTERRUPTED.—AN UNENVIABLE "FIX."

THE Dutch are not a "go-ahead" people, though they are frugal, industrious, and sensible. From this circumstance, though they laboured away most pertinaciously at growing bad wine, they never thought of testing the capabilities of the Cape Colony to grow something more profitable and of better quality. It was reserved for the English settlers to do this, and they hit on the right article when they selected sheep for their experiments. The experience of Australia aided them in their estimates; and the Cape, from being, almost down to 1830, a mere wine-

growing and hide-and-tallow-exporting colony, is now one of our first wool-growing possessions.

Lieutenant Daniell, R.N., may be said to be the father of South African sheep-farming. The progress which has been made since he started it, in 1827 or 1828, may be appreciated from this fact, that, in 1830, the whole eastern province of the colony exported only 4,500 pounds of wool, at the value of 222*l.* In 1842 (twelve years later), the same province exported above 1,000,000 pounds, at the value of upwards of 34,000*l.* Sheep-farming, therefore, became "the rage," and not unreasonably. It is the best and safest investment of time, capital, and labour, that an emigrant to the colony can make.

From what I said of a sheep-farmer's life in the last chapter, it will be guessed that no great knowledge or ability is required to manage a sheep-farm. But this is not altogether so. Every immigrant should pay a six months' visit to other people's farms before he starts one of his own, so that he may acquire a knowledge of the habits and wants of the stock, the art of shearing, and the value of the different kinds of sheep. Two young gentlemen once immigrated to the colony with a little money. They hired a farm as soon as they arrived, and purchased six hundred sheep

as breeding stock. Alas! they discovered, when too late, that the sheep were "wethers!" They were Cockneys, who would act on their own judgment alone. Now it is generally observed, that Cockneys make the best farmers in the colony, because, coming without any previous knowledge of the art they intend to follow, they take advice of those whose experience enables them to give it, instead of trying to manage things in South Africa as they do in England. Of course they occasionally make comical blunders; as in the case of one very sharp fellow, who, thinking to give to his brother farmer the "go-by," planted split-pease, in order to raise a crop of them all ready for use. Such little botanical errors, however, are not common.

To give an idea of the profits of sheep-farming, properly carried on, I will select one or two examples. Messrs. S. purchased a flock of 400 Merino ewes for 400*l.*, and a farm of adequate size for 450*l.* Their balance-sheet for two years' farming stood as follows :—

Dr.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1837.	Cost of 400 ewes . .	400	0	0			
	Hire of rams for the season .	8	0	0			
1838.	Cost of five rams at £10 .	50	0	0			
					458	0	0
	Ditto of two years' management . .				138	0	0
	Interest on purchase of farm, £450 at 6 per cent.*				54	0	0
	Cost of wagon and oxen . .				100	0	0
					£750	0	0
Cr.							
	Amount of wool sold . . .				260	0	0
	Profit and loss				490	0	0
					£750	0	0

Value of stock remaining :—

	311 Ewes (old) at £1 . . .				311	0	0
	300 Ditto (young) at £2 . . .				600	0	0
	301 Wethers at 12s. . . .				180	0	0
	912				1091	0	0
	Wagon and oxen . . .				80	0	0
					1171	0	0
	Deduct profit and loss . .				490	0	0
	Result of two years' farming . .				£680	0	0

The next example is that of a firm in which my old friend Mr. Chase, whose Christmas dinner I have mentioned with grateful remembrance, is a partner; and to him I am indebted for all my "statistics" on Cape affairs. A better authority

* The regular legal interest of the colony.

could not be found. The following balance-sheet is for seven years, and includes, as the reader will see, every kind of incidental expense.

Dr.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1831. Stock purchased, 700 merino ewes and 15 rams . .	259	17	6			
1834. St k purchased, 4 Saxon rams	84	15	3			
Ditto ditto, 10 Australian ditto	277	19	6			
1836. Ditto ditto, 12 ditto ditto	156	0	0			
1837. Ditto ditto, 5 ditto .	68	0	0			
1838. Ditto ditto, 10 Saxon ditto	150	0	0			
1839. Ditto ditto, 7 ditto ewes and 3 rams . . .	160	19	6			
Stock purchased, 692 ewes and rams .				1157	11	9
1835. Passage-money for two German shepherds, their families and dogs . .				157	10	0
1831-39. Wages, clothing and provisions .				1809	0	0
Sheds, shepherds' houses, &c. . .				235	14	0
Interest at 6 per cent. on original cost of three farms, in extent 14,500 acres, £942				452	2	8
Two wagons and oxen . .				200	0	0
Quit-rent and taxes on stock . .				114	0	0
Bagging and implements . .				127	2	0
Incidental expenses . . .				297	18	0
Profit and loss . . .				404	8	4
				£4945	6	9
Cr.						
Sheep sold from 1832 to 1839 . . .				1494	11	6
Wool sold ditto ditto . . .				3428	11	0
Sale of sundries				22	4	3
				£4945	6	9

Value of stock remaining :—

	£	s.	d.
50 Rams at £10	500	0	0
45 Ditto at £1 17*s.* 6*d.*	84	7	6
1332 Wethers at 12*s.*	799	4	0
7 Imported ewes £12	84	0	0
1611 Ewes at £1 10*s.*	2416	10	0
1300 Lambs at 17*s.* 6*d.*	1137	10	0
100 Young rams £1 17*s.* 6*d.*	197	10	0
1000 Hoggets 17*s.* 6*d.*	953	15	0
5535 Sheep, worth	6162	16	6
Value of shedding	200	0	0
Ditto of wagons and oxen	120	0	0
Add profit and loss	404	8	4
Result of eight years' farming	£6887	4	10

These two examples (very ordinary ones) show that sheep-farming is a tolerably certain investment, yielding from 20 to 25 per cent. on capital judiciously employed.

Such being the case, I was rather surprised to find a kind of "panic" prevailing among the sheep-farmers, and several of them being constantly "sold up." I inquired of my friend what it could all mean.

"*Que voulez vous?*" was his reply. "These men have begun without capital. As soon as they arrive in the colony they hire a farm; buy stock on credit for two or three years; live on the sale of the wool and the increase, and also on

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credit (for such fellows live like fighting-cocks); and then, when at last pay-day arrives, they pathetically exclaim that they are ruined; they abuse farming, and the colony, and everything and everybody but themselves, because they have not got what they never have had—the money to pay for their purchases. The only wonder is, how they carry on the war so long without going into the Gazette. Look at P. He has a capital house, a first-rate flock, keeps four horses in the stable, besides plenty at grass, gives good dinners and good wines (we'll dine there to-morrow), and yet, I'll swear, the fellow never had a sixpence, and his sheep are not paid for yet, though he has been five years in the colony."

"Then he will soon be in the Gazette?"

"Doubtless; but his estate will still pay a fair dividend. He will be voted 'unfortunate;' and, happen what may, he cannot be worse off than when he started; while in the meantime he has had his five years' fun, and can say with the Giaour,

"'And come what may, I *have been* bless'd.'"

"Is this the usual Cape farmer's philosophy?" I inquired deferentially.

"Heaven forefend!" cried my companion.

"But unluckily there are dozens of such men, and they do the colony vast mischief."

Agriculture is not a safe pursuit at the Cape, when carried on exclusively. Cape wheat is the finest in the world; so say the sages of Mark Lane. Oats thrive admirably. Barley is little cultivated. Indian corn is grown everywhere. So are Kafir corn, and most of the vegetables common to England. But after all, the profits are very precarious, as Nature has sent several enemies of vegetation to South Africa. First comes the formidable "rust," or smut, which will sometimes attack the crops in one district, for several years in succession, and destroy all the grain grown in it; and then take its departure for three or four years.

Messrs. P. and K. were two active, enterprising young fellows, with little capital, but plenty of energy and industry. They did not "fancy" sheep-farming, because it was too slow and lazy a life, and was carried on in the least picturesque parts of the colony. They determined to turn to agriculture. They hired a farm in the beautiful district of Oliphant's Hoek (*Anglice*, Elephant's Corner), and, with ploughs and oxen, set manfully to work, to till the earth, and live by the sweat of their brows. A magnificent crop in due time

rose from the ground, and sweet were the reveries of the friends as they mentally reaped it, and stored it, and sold it, and counted the "dollars." Alas! there is a faint suspicion of "rust" visible on a few ears; it grows daily more palpable; it spreads through the whole length and breadth of their fair fields; the magnificent crop is ruined —worthless!

It was a disheartening result; but the friends were brave fellows, and not likely to cry "die" at the first blow. They set to work again, and next year brought them precisely the same result.

They then purchased a stock of cattle, horses, and a few sheep, and only cultivated a very small portion of their land. Since that time they have prospered, as such good fellows deserve, and are, I trust, by this time among the most wealthy, as they were always among the most popular and hospitable, of the eastern province farmers.

Another enemy of the agriculturist is the locust. But I shall have to describe my own experience of this little "plague of Egypt," so that I will not trouble the reader with his misdeeds in this place.

Cattle are profitable stock, and thrive everywhere throughout the colony. But Englishmen

generally seem to have little fancy for them. Most of the large cattle-farmers are Dutchmen. Their profits arise principally from the sale of butter, which is made in a very primitive sort of churn, the whole of the milk (and not the cream only) being used. I cannot say that the production is by any means equal to the best English butter; but it is not bad. The price of cattle sounds ridiculous to English ears:—Thirty-five to fifty shillings for cows and draught oxen; sixty to seventy shillings for fat slaughter oxen.

The uncertainty of the supply of labour at the Cape, is perhaps one cause of an Englishman's comparative prejudice against cattle. It is by no means an unusual thing for every servant on your farm to walk off the day after receiving their month's wages; and you find yourself

> "Like the last rose of summer left blooming alone,
> Your 'sooty' companions all 'mizzled' and gone;"

by no means a pleasant predicament, if you have a few thousand sheep of your own. But imagine the disaster with four or five hundred cows that must be milked!

We all know that, when an English housewife feels herself compelled to give warning to Betty the cook for impertinence, Mary the housemaid often steps up and says, "then she shall go too;"

whereupon Jeames the footman declares that he shall go likewise. Very similar is the case with your Hottentot servants, though far more disastrous in its results. Besides which, they never give you even an hour's warning; they veritably "stand not upon the order of their going, but go." Some fine morning you, the farmer, wake up, and sing out for some shaving-water, if you are such a luxurious dog as to shave at all. There is no answer.

You imprecate *sotto voce.*

You slip on a few indispensable articles of costume, and sally forth. Everything looks remarkably quiet. Not a creature is to be seen. You go to the huts surrounding your mansion, and find them all empty; you call every man's and every woman's name upon the place, till your lungs are tired. Not a sound in reply, save echo and the bleating of your sheep, the lowing of your cattle, and the simultaneous yelping and barking of your sixty curs.

You use very shocking language.

Then, if you are a philosopher—as the wilderness soon teaches you to be—you go into the house, boil your own kettle, and make your own coffee. Afterwards you saddle your nag, and ride over to the nearest farm and borrow a few

"helps," as the Yankees term them, to tend your flocks and herds, till you get fresh people of your own.

And what is the meaning of all this? asks the innocent English reader. Are you a bad master? Did you quarrel with any of your people? Did you neglect to pay their wages? or to serve them good rations? Have they any cause to be annoyed or angry with you?

None whatever, my good sir. It is simply that they love change; and some of them, perhaps, intend to take a month, or two months' holiday, and get drunk for the whole of that period on the wages they have just received from you. So far from having any cause to dislike you, or any reason to abuse you, they will probably swear you are the best master in the world, and send their friends and relations, who may be in want of situations, to you to supply their own places.

Meantime, such a "turn-out" seldom fails to cause you a heavy loss, in addition to all the nuisances of having to be your own cook, groom, valet, housemaid, and perhaps herd, for some indefinite period.

Horse-breeding is carried on to a great extent in the Cape colony, especially in some districts near Cape Town. The export trade in horses to

the Mauritius, to India, and even to Australia, is very considerable. They are profitable stock, though of course the returns are slow, and on that account more capital is required to embark in this branch of farming than any other. And here I must tell the reader a little about Cape horses.

Generally speaking, a regular Cape horse (one whose pedigree cannot be traced to any imported stallion) is an ugly brute. He is about fourteen hands high, and his chief characteristics are, a low, narrow shoulder, an ewe-neck, and a goose-rump. His "pins" are generally pretty good. He is villanously broken; his mouth is as tough as an oak; his pace is a shuffling, tripping, wriggling abomination, between an amble and a canter, with a suspicion of a "run" in it. Put him beyond this pace, and he gallops as awkwardly as a cow. As for walking, he is innocent of the pace beyond three miles an hour. Trotting, neither he, nor his breaker, nor breeder, nor owner (if a Dutchman), ever heard of. He is apt to be ill-tempered too—often given to kicking, and occasionally to "bucking." So much for his evil qualities.

His good points are numerous. He is the hardiest of his race. You may feed him on nothing but grass all the year round, and yet ride him a hundred and twenty miles in two days, and he will

show no signs of distress. You may dismount at any place, or even in the open country, drop his rein over his head, and he will stand as long as you please in waiting for you. You may generally shoot from his back without his flinching. You need never trouble yourself about a stable or a groom for him; he is quite unaccustomed to such luxuries. You may go to sleep as you ride him —for his ugly, awkward-looking pace is the gentlest and easiest of motions, and will scarcely disturb your lightest slumbers. Lastly, you need not fear colds, coughs, or any of the ills that horse-flesh is heir to. He is never afflicted with any disease save one—and that is deadly and incurable. It is called the "horse-sickness." It is not exactly glanders, but is more like the most violent attack of influenza than anything else. It is a perfect curse to the country, for its remedy has never been discovered, and its cause is in the highest degree doubtful. Some impute it to the damp grass at certain seasons of the year—others fancy that it is caused by swallowing the webs of the gossamer spider which are scattered all over the country on a fine dewy morning. Dozens have been the theories, but none have been well proven. Remedies of all kinds — bleeding, blistering, plugging, purging,

and every other process have been tried in vain. The most charitable remedy is a rifle-ball through the poor brute's head, for it is impossible to cure him, and his life appears most wretched during the few short days or hours it is dragged out under this fearful malady.

Moreover, the disease is apparently infectious. At all events, horses on the same farm are generally attacked, one after the other. One fact alone seems to be decided beyond the possibility of a doubt. No horse which has been kept exclusively *in the stable, and never allowed to graze,* has ever been attacked with this dreadful equine scourge. A valuable horse may, therefore, always be protected from it.

The breed of horses is being now vastly improved. Thoroughbred stallions are continually being imported from England, and their progeny approaches to the home stock. I very much doubt, however, whether the horse ever naturally attains to so large a size in tropical or warm latitudes, as he does in our own land. When the 7th Dragoon Guards came out to the Cape, they had considerable difficulty in horsing the regiment, though they took as low a standard as fifteen hands for their chargers. Even at this standard the men in full dress, with their brass

helmets, carbines, and accoutrements, looked rather absurdly mounted, and reminded one forcibly of the hobby-horse figures in a Christmas pantomime.

Substance is the quality in which the Cape horse is most deficient. When he is above his usual height of fourteen hands, the additional elevation is generally due only to a longer pair of legs, and not to a larger "barrel," so that the animal is inferior in quality. No one can have a higher opinion than myself of the English thoroughbred, for almost every essential of horse-flesh: but I still doubt whether he is the proper animal to import to the Cape just at present. My opinion is, that he is too light and clean-bred to be mated with the narrow-chested, low-shouldered, small-bodied mares of the colony. He will do for the second or third generation, but not for the first: and in the meantime some strong, powerful, half-breds should precede him. It was not from a cross between pure Arab blood, and a set of under-sized, ill-looking ponies, that we obtained our present glorious race of thoroughbreds in England; but we had already a set of fine animals, in the shape of Norman chargers, Cleveland bays, and Danish carriage-horses, whereon to engraft the Eastern stock. They

must first get something of the kind at the Cape, before they can hope to raise a fine race of cattle.

The prices of horses are very low. A horse good enough for all ordinary purposes may be bought from 9*l.* to 15*l.* I once rode a journey of two hundred and thirty miles with the same set of horses (four in number, one for my servant, one for myself, one for saddle-bags, and another for changing,) in four days ; and I can positively declare that not one of my nags displayed so much fatigue at the end of the journey as my hunter has generally done after a good day's run with the hounds in England. The most expensive of these four horses cost me 12*l.*, and the cheapest 4*l.* 10*s.*! It is true that I fed them well on the road ; but a Dutch boer would have taken them the same distance without a handful of corn all the way.

Apropos of riding journeys, I would strongly advise a visitor to the Cape never to go on one alone. He should always be accompanied by an after-rider or a friend, in case of accidents.

I was once staying with a friend at his farm, and I received a letter requiring my immediate presence in Port Elizabeth, sixty miles off. I had no horse ready, for my own was on the sick list.

My friend had only one to spare, and that one he kindly lent me.

Strapping my little *valise* to my saddle, I bade farewell to my friend, and cantered away. I found out that my borrowed nag had an awkward habit of stumbling in a very ugly manner; but as I had seldom crossed a Cape horse that did otherwise, I took but little notice of this pleasant peculiarity, except over very bad ground.

I had proceeded about seven or eight miles on my journey, and was cantering along over a miraculously (for the Cape) good piece of shingly road, on the ridge of a hill which overlooked Algoa Bay on the one side, and the dark and apparently boundless bush — the home of the leopard, the elephant, and the buffalo—on the other. I fell into a reverie, and tried to conjure up visions of what that wild country might be a century hence, when the hand of civilization, levelling —— here I felt a sudden shock, and found myself sprawling on the ground! Before I could jump to my feet, the horse had got upon his, and, to my intense horror, he was now galloping away at the top of his speed towards the dense bush. I followed him as long as I was able, but at length I was compelled by exhaustion, and the conviction of the inutility of further

pursuit, to give it up, and find myself eight miles from any house—my horse, saddle, bridle, clothes, and valise, scampering over the wild country. I crawled back to my friend's house, and was received with a most unconsoling burst of laughter. Four days later, the missing brute was "pounded," some thirty miles off, with the wretched remnants of what was once a saddle still clinging to his sides.

CHAPTER VII.

HOSPITALITY OF THE FARMERS.—HOW TO LIVE ON NOTHING A-YEAR.—MY FIRST VISIT TO A DUTCHMAN.—AN ELEGANT HOMESTEAD.—CONVERSATION UNDER DIFFICULTIES.—SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS.—MY BEDFELLOW!—THE DUTCH FARMERS—THEIR PERSONS—CHARACTER—NON-PROGRESSIONISTS—FAMILY LOVE.—DISLIKE OF BRITISH RULE.—CAUSES THEREOF.—EMANCIPATION OF THE SLAVES—DREADFUL CONSEQUENCES.—DUTCH VIEW OF THE QUESTION.—THE COMMANDO SYSTEM.—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS OF THE BOERS.—THEIR SIMILARITY TO THEIR PROGENITORS FROM HOLLAND.

HOSPITALITY is a virtue universal in the Cape colony. It would, indeed, be a vile country to dwell in were it otherwise; for, in such lands, man is more than ever dependent on his fellow-man.

There are only two modes of travelling at the Cape. One is by wagon drawn by oxen—the other on horseback. If you follow the latter mode of progression, you will be under an obligation to perfect strangers, probably every day of your journey, not only for a night's lodging, but also for your daily food. You need never dread a cold welcome. Ride up to any farmer's house,

knock at the door (if it be shut—which, by the way, it seldom is), tell him you are a traveller; and he will at once beg you to "off-saddle" and come in. He will offer you anything and everything his little larder contains, and he will ask you to sleep there. You will accept both offers, *si sapis*—make yourself as agreeable as nature will allow you—and the next morning your host will entreat you to stay a month with him—and *mean it* too. In fact, if you are an unconscientious fellow, and fond of "sponging" on your friends, I strongly suspect that you might live for five or six years on a capital of ten or twelve pounds! You have only to lay out that sum in a horse, and saddle, and bridle, and ride about the country, calling first on one man and then on another, and taking up your quarters with them for any period, from a day to three months, free from every conceivable expense. In fact, I knew a man in the colony who had precisely carried out that same system for three or four years, and yet was always a welcome guest at every farm, where he drank his friends' brandy, rode their horses, smoked their tobacco, shot their game, and ate their dinner, while no one had ever even hinted to him,

> "Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti;
> Tempus abire tibi est."

You will occasionally have to turn into odd quarters; for South African travelling, like Misery, "makes one acquainted with strange bed-fellows." My first journey alone was a good instance of this.

I rode along the way indicated to me till the shades of evening began to close upon me; when I fortunately distinguished a house exactly answering to the description of the one I was to assail for a night's lodging. It was a low-built wattle-and-daub hut, thatched in a most primitive style, white-washed, but innocent of glazed windows or of paint, or of any such modern luxuries. It had one or two holes with shutters to them, through which to admit light and air. It had the usual double door—that is to say, divided horizontally in the centre, so that the lower half could be closed to exclude vagrant fowls and *fragrant* pigs, nomadic ducks, and hungry curs; while the upper half was open to admit flies and dust, and heat and air. Scattered around the house were sundry Hottentot and Fingo huts, looking like rather large anthills (though I have seen larger edifices of the latter description in South America). These same huts are always surrounded by heaps of bones and the dirtiest of all imaginable rags, and from their

recesses issue forth, borne upon the breeze, smells and sounds which no pen could describe—*tant mieux*, says the reader. On the ground lie half a dozen little black children, whom no stitch of clothing has ever yet ornamented or disfigured. There is a sweet sight for thee, oh! lover of Nature simple and unadorned! A little way off are the kraals (or cattle-pens), of the most primitive construction. Heaps of bush cut from the neighbouring thicket, and laid with the branching ends outwards, form circular or oblong enclosures, within which cattle are bellowing, or sheep are bleating.

At the door stood a burly Dutchman, six feet three at the least, and proportionably stout. He was smoking a short pipe, of course. He looked the picture of stoicism and impenetrability; I rode up and lifted my wide-awake, and the Dutchman did likewise. I was *very* doubtful of my own Dutch, so I began a "Good day" in English. The Dutchman took his pipe from his mouth, blew a cloud large enough to have darkened the sun, if that luminary had not retired to rest, and requested me to "off-saddle." I did so, and the Dutchman conducted me inside his house, where sat the *frouw*, to whom I made a bow, while she continued peeling a baby — I beg

pardon for using a term which describes what she *appeared* to be doing—she was undressing it, as it roared and squealed its disgust at such treatment.

> "Short speeches pass between two men who speak
> No common language."

Which was almost the case with myself and the boer. He could not speak a word of English, and I but a very few of Dutch; but still we managed to talk, and make one another understand about a fifth of what we said. When he did *not* understand me, he nodded his head gravely, to intimate his entire assent to my opinions, and took a very long pull at his short pipe. When *I* did not comprehend him, I laughed heartily (a Dutchman always likes to be suspected of making a joke, even when he does not see it himself), and so we became excellent friends.

Later in the evening, one or two more Dutchmen came in, and another English traveller, much to my delight. The table was spread for a conglomerate meal of tea and supper. There was very weak tea and plenty of milk; chops broiled, chops stewed, and chops boiled; *meelies*, or Indian corn, roasted on the stem; and a little Cape "smoke." Men who have ridden sixty miles on horseback, can eat without much press-

ing; and therefore I supped heartily, in spite of the evident recent death of the sheep that supplied those same chops.

In the innocence of my mind I now began to wonder where we were all destined to sleep that night. I was not left long in doubt. Two or three ox-hides were brought in and spread upon the floor—one of which was assigned to each two men for their couch. (I omitted to state that the floor was of earth only.) I was myself conducted into another room, which I justly considered a great honour, as there were but three apartments in the mansion. Here I was shown a kind of sofa, on which to rest my weary limbs. It was a long narrow affair, with a very thin mattrass; but still it was better than a hide on the floor. In five minutes after my host had left me, I had "turned in," and was soon fast on the road to Dream-land.

I awoke, however, by the sound of some one moving in the room, and looking up I beheld a very stout Dutchman, whose obesity had excited my wonder all the evening, unbuttoning his waistcoat and preparing for his couch. I looked about the room and saw no hide prepared for him, which I thought was rather cruel. However, I consoled myself with the idea that such a

"crumby" gentleman may be said to carry his own feather-bed about with him. Poor fellow! he looked very warm, and his breath was decidedly short. What a vast projection that was in front! Here I got very dozy, and my eyes were involuntarily closing.

Again I started awake. The fat man was by my side. What the deuce could he want? He pushed my body very carefully a little nearer to the wall, and—oh horror!—began to lay himself down by my side!

For the moment I was half tempted to cry "murder!" and yet half inclined to laugh at my own ludicrous situation. He actually *did* get on to the sofa, and that huge projection jammed me tight up against the wall, where I remained panting and perspiring, while the Dutchman snored as loud as Polyphemus. Once or twice I maliciously endeavoured to drive my elbow into the "corporation" to send it a little further off, but in vain; it yielded to the pressure with the elasticity of a gigantic Indian-rubber ball, and though its owner occasionally ejaculated a faint sound, between a grunt and a choke, he never ceased to sleep and snore. How long I endured the torment I know not; but at length, in a fit of desperation, I released myself from my horrible

captivity, and threw myself down on the ground, which, with my saddle for a pillow, I found a far better couch than the sofa, shared with a human hippopotamus.

The next morning my fat friend was quite amazed to see that I preferred the hard ground to his companionship; but he laughed heartily when I explained the exact cause of my preference.

The Dutch boers are in person the finest men in the colony. I have seen them constantly from six feet two to six feet six inches in height; broad and muscular in proportion. Occasionally they reach a height and size bordering on the gigantic. Their strength is immense; and though a peaceably-disposed set of men, they at all times entertain a considerable feeling of contempt for any diminutive "Englander." The Hottentots look up to them with great reverence, as such a puny race of savages might be expected to do. At the time of the rebellion of the boers (as it has been unjustly termed) the government thought of employing the Cape Corps, which is composed principally of Hottentots, against them; but they were warned by those who knew the character of the latter people well, that they would never show fight against men for whom they

naturally felt such dread, as for the boers, men whose prowess they well knew, and whose unerring aim with their long guns they had witnessed too often to wish to become their targets.

The boers are great admirers of feats of daring, strength, and activity. A "mighty hunter," such as Gordon Cumming, would be welcomed with open arms by every Dutch boer in South Africa. Poor Moultrie, of the 75th, the "lion hunter" *par excellence,* was one of their idols. So is Bain, the "long-haired," who has made some half dozen excursions into the far wilderness in search of the lord of the forest and all his subjects. They hunt far more than the English farmers, and are, as I have said, "crack" shots, though they use a great, long, awkward, heavy, flint-locked gun, that would make Purdey or Westley Richards shudder with disgust.

The characteristics of a race certainly descend to the fifth and sixth, perhaps the fiftieth generation. The Cape Dutchmen are the same frugal, industrious, sober people as those of the parent stock in Holland. Their persons are far more altered than their mental peculiarities, though the "Dutch build" is still apparent. They are, however, terrible "non-progressionists." They use the same plough as their ancestors used

eighty years ago, though it is the most lumbering machine ever beheld, and requires twelve strong oxen to draw it. They often shear their sheep with the wool all dirty on their backs, though their English fellow-colonists wash theirs most carefully, and thereby get far higher prices for their wool. They reject steam-mills, and adhere to some indescribable antediluvian contrivance for *pounding*, instead of grinding their corn. A flail is unknown to them, and the corn is trodden out to this day by horses or oxen, as described, or alluded to, in the laws of Moses, whereby the straw is entirely spoilt. Their churns I have before alluded to. When first I saw one, with a dark damsel at work at it, I took it for a blacksmith's bellows, and wondered where the fire was.

Not the least pleasing characteristic of the Cape Dutch is their family affection. To the second and third generations they live at the same homestead, building an additional hut for each newly-wedded couple. They marry young, and have generally very large families; and, as many of them live to a great age, it is no uncommon thing to see a grandfather and grandmother of ninety surrounded by half a dozen sons, having in their turn each one half a dozen grown-up

children. They appear to be truly "happy families."

The Dutch formerly entertained a great dislike to British rule. I do not mean to assert that they are even yet thoroughly reconciled to it; but they display less repugnance to submit to it than of yore. I fear they had too much of justice on their side in the complaints they uttered, for they had not met with proper treatment at the hands of our government. Their feeling must at all events have been very strong when it induced them to leave their own farms by the hundred, and "trek," or emigrate, to the north-east, anywhere away from British misrule.

The truth is, that the boers suffered severely from two acts of the English government, both praiseworthy in intention, but each direful in its results. The first of these was the emancipation of the slaves. I fancy I see all Exeter Hall frowning in virtuous indignation at the asseveration that *this* act was "direful in its results;" yet such I unhesitatingly affirm it to have been in the Cape Colony.

I am not going to defend (even were it possible to do so) the principle of slavery in the abstract; but I have to deal with simple facts. It is notorious that the Dutch were most kind

and indulgent masters to their slaves. It is equally notorious that no class of people were better fed, clothed, or cared for; less overworked, or in any way ill used, than the slave population in South Africa. The government at home thought proper, from the noblest and purest motives, and at a great sacrifice, to set these people free. What was the result? These people (amounting to thirty-six thousand), who had hitherto had their every want supplied by their masters, found the responsibility of providing for themselves thrust upon them without any previous training or preparation. Self-reliance they could not possibly have. But they were dazzled by the name of this new boon, "freedom." They thought it a fine thing to be at the beck and call of no man; they pictured to themselves the savage's seventh heaven of delight, the freedom to do nothing except get drunk. They actually abandoned their old masters in a body; those who had not one word of complaint to utter against their past treatment, equally with those who might consider themselves aggrieved. They abandoned their ancient homes, and commenced the celebration of those fearful saturnalia which have already immolated two thirds of them, and which to

this day fill the streets of every town and village in the colony with drunkenness and debauchery.

They congregated in the towns in small, confined, and loathsome apartments, living or half-starving on any refuse they could procure in idleness, in lieu of the generous and plentiful meals supplied by their late masters. They planted themselves in wretched filthy huts covered with old hides, decayed rags, rotten sugar-bags, and dirty thatch, through which came rain and wind to chill the miserable occupants. From these places they issued but seldom, and then to earn only a stray shilling for some trivial service, and to purchase with it fresh drink to continue their debauch. Who shall tell of the horrible scenes of fiendish depravity these huts and dens exhibited?

Pestilence followed. Measles and small-pox assailed them in forms unknown in our own country. Nothing could check the fearful progress of these diseases as they seized on the impoverished, and weakened, and debauched Negro and Hottentot. The plague was not so destructive in England as were these maladies among the coloured classes at the Cape. They died not alone in their huts in the towns and villages, but on the roadsides, as they wandered

they knew not whither; in the open fields; in miserable cabins (which were obliged to be burnt over the decaying remains of the dead).

It would be impossible to estimate correctly the number destroyed by this dreadful visitation. Suffice it to say that the coloured races in South Africa were *visibly* decreased by it; and that if it were not actually engendered by the state in which those races were then living, it was at least frightfully augmented in its disastrous results by the exposed condition in which the Emancipation Act had placed them—by their removal from the guardianship of those whom self-interest, as well as every better and gentler feeling, would have prompted to protect and aid them.

So far for the evils wrought upon the slaves themselves—evils which have not passed away, but whose dire effects are but too visible to this hour. As for their masters—ungathered vintages, fallow fields, crops rotten on the ground, untended flocks, unserved tables, and labour-lacking warehouses—these were a few of the evils experienced by the colonists. The Dutch, who had pursued agriculture, were literally ruined. They could not get a labourer to aid them. The progress of the colony was fearfully

retarded by it, and it has not to this day recovered from the shock.

It was natural that the Dutch farmers—men of no great education, of no very far-seeing minds—should look with an evil eye on the government which had thus ruined their prospects. They were conscious of no evil in regard to their own conduct to their slaves; and they could not see why their rulers should deprive them of a species of property which had produced good fruit both to the master and the serf. It was useless to argue on the abstract principle with men who were accustomed to look to the *immediate effect* for the test of what was right or wrong.

"Am *I* the better for this emancipation?" said Mynheer. Indisputably no.

"Are they the better for it—look and answer?"

We fear not.

"*Then* it is a wrong, and an injustice, and a robbery."

Another subject of complaint among the boers was, the abolition of the Commando system against the Kafirs. I shall have to speak of this hereafter, when I visit my old friends, the last-named gentry. I will merely observe here, that

whatever might have been the defects of that system, it enabled the frontier farmer to protect himself against the violence or rapine of his savage neighbours—a desideratum which no other system has yet attained.

The Dutch are a very religious people. Whatever may be their distance from a place of worship, they never fail to keep the Sabbath-day with all due observances.

Some portion of the Bible, too, is read every evening in almost every boer's household, before all the family and the domestic servants. It is not one of the least pleasurable sights in the colony to behold assembled, in the large room of the principal dwelling in a Dutch homestead, a whole family, numbering perhaps forty or fifty, from the grey-headed grandsire to the flaxen-headed infant, listening with devout attention to the hallowed words of the Sacred Book, and joining in prayer and praise to the great Father of the whole human family.

Four times a year the sacrament is administered in every Dutch church in the colony. And then, from far and wide, the wagons, pour into the towns, bringing families who have travelled even one hundred and fifty miles to partake of the Lord's Supper. New Year's Day is always

one of these occasions: it is a general holiday throughout the land, and is indeed the most sacred day in the Dutch calendar. A stranger would imagine that some *fête* or great entertainment, some fair or festival, had drawn together the crowds of young and old assembled in the towns on this day. Little would he imagine that they had been summoned there only by the recollection of the divine words—"This do in remembrance of me."

Upon the whole, the reader will see that I entertain a high opinion of the Dutch colonists at the Cape. They have many serious faults doubtless—they are the faults of their phlegmatic progenitors, and of their cousins in Holland at this day. But they have, at the same time, a large share of those sterling good qualities which make men respectable in the highest sense of the word, throughout the world. These good qualities they equally derive from Holland—thus witnessing that to races, as well as to individuals, may be applied the old Roman's maxim:

"Cœlum, non animum, mutant qui trans mare currunt."

CHAPTER VIII.

WAGON TRAVELLING.—LIFE ON A JOURNEY.—SPORTING AND READING.—PLEASANT ROADS—A NIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS.—MEDITATIONS.—OCCASIONAL DISCOMFORTS.—AN AGREEABLE "HONEY-MOON."—DRUNKEN SERVANTS.—MISSING OXEN.—A BILL FOR DAMAGES.—SERIOUS DROUGHT.—A TEMPTING GLASS OF WATER.—EXCITEMENT AMONG THE CATTLE.—MY HANDSOME BUSHMAN.—HIS AMIABLE CHARACTER.—A NARROW ESCAPE.—HOTTENTOT CHRISTIANITY.—MISSIONARIES.—INDEPENDENT GENTLEMEN.—PURE MORALS.—FRIGHTENING A FARMER.

WAGON travelling is decidedly slow work. In an age when even Parliamentary trains manage fifteen miles an hour, and expresses fifty, it seems odd that, in any portion of the globe, a man can be satisfied with twenty miles in *a day*. Such, however, is a fair day's travelling in a Cape wagon. The same "span" (or team) of oxen take you the whole journey, whether the distance be thirty miles, or three hundred; and as the poor brutes get nothing to eat but grass and water—and, occasionally, a very scanty supply of both—it can hardly be expected that they will pull your lumbering and well-laden wagon more

than the distance I have mentioned, day by day.

After all, the journey is not so tedious as might be imagined. It is like so many days of pic-nicking, with fresh scenery each day, and in a glorious climate. Your wagon is, of course, well-furnished with tea, sugar, coffee, wine, flour, eggs, fresh and preserved meat, vegetables, and, in fact, all that refreshes the inward man: for, be it recollected, that there are no inns, or at least so few, that no wagon-traveller thinks of visiting them, and you are not expected to ask for the farmer's hospitality on the road, as you do when you travel on horseback.

Your wagon is your travelling-carriage, your commissariat, and your home. A long stretcher, with a mattress on it, is slung in the wagon, and serves you for a lounging-couch by day, and a bed by night. When there are too many in the travelling-party to sleep in the wagon, it is usual to carry a tent to be pitched at night for a "bed-room." Your Hottentots sleep under the wagon, or under a bush close to the fire, and prefer it to a feather-bed.

Travellers should always take their guns with them, as they may chance to get some sport on the road,—not to mention the possibility of an

unusually hungry hyena or leopard venturing to make a midnight attack on their oxen. At six in the morning we will suppose our equipage to start. At about ten we "out-span,"—that is, take out the oxen and turn them loose to graze, and prepare for breakfast. Dismiss from your mind, good reader, all thoughts of hedges and ditches, and enclosures, we are in a land where such things exist not. Our Hottentots soon collect some fuel, our wagon is drawn up by the side of a mimosa bush, a fire is lighted, the kettle is set to boil, the coffee is made, the steaks are cooked in the frying-pan, and some hot cakes of meal (such as king Alfred burnt) are ready for us. We have the appetite of a boa-constrictor after a month's fast. We have a beautiful country round us, a bright sky above us, and a heart free from care; but we prefer beefsteaks to scenery, and coffee to sunshine, just at this moment, and we make a terrific breakfast.

We have finished eating and drinking; we feel placid and happy; we begin to admire the scenery; perhaps we pull out a sketch-book, or a cigar, and while away half-an-hour. Then we feel inclined for a stroll. We take our gun, and wander where we will, through the park-like country around us. There is a huge bird flying,

startled from the neighbouring bush by our approach. We let fly, though our ornithological knowledge is insufficient to inform us of the name of our target. Down it tumbles,—we never shot so large a bird before,—we take it back to the wagon, and our Hottentots tell us we have shot a pauw (a species of bustard), and recommend us to eat it. We rather hesitate about that; but next day we venture to have it cooked, and find it most delicious.

It is now twelve o'clock. Our servants are catching the oxen, and "in-spanning." What a noise from oxen and men!—though the sounds made by both are so similar, that more than once we are puzzled to know *à qui la parole.* We start again, lying on our stretcher, and reading a "fashionable novel" on the plains of South Africa. We wonder how the interesting and high-minded, and well-tailored hero would look in "leather crackers" and a wide-awake, smoking a short pipe in a Cape wagon; or, how the lovely Angelina, the heroine, would like to peel our potatoes for dinner. We fall asleep—no insinuation against the author of the fashionable novel, however.

We start up from a pleasant dream with the noise of a tremendous thump, and the sensation

that the wagon, for the moment, gave way under us. We look out in front,—it is all right. We take a peep at the road behind, and we find that our wheel-track just now descended about three feet at one step! We call the driver, and ask him if it was not very dangerous to drive down that place. He first stares, and then laughs—he sees that we are very "green," and tells us that he could drive down that mountain (which is exactly perpendicular) in perfect safety.

At three or four o'clock we "out-span" again. Another fire is lighted — another meal is prepared. We "walk into" pale ale, if we are so luxurious as to have brought a few bottles among our stock. Perhaps we even taste a drop of *véritable eau-de-vie de Cognac.* We smoke our cigar, or our pipe, take another short ramble with our gun, fire at an ostrich and miss it, which makes us savage; shoot a bush-buck, or a guinea-fowl, which makes us conceited—and then start again for another two hours. And then again we out-span for the night.

And now for a glorious night in the magnificent climate of South Africa! Can anything be more beautiful, more enchanting? The sky is of that deep, dark blue, which we never see in northern climates: the moon is shining as she

can only shine in such a sky; the stars (albeit somewhat paled by the larger luminary) still beautifully bright and distinct, with the magnificent southern cross among them; perfect stillness rests on everything around; yonder, rearing their heads to the skies are the lofty and rugged mountains, where no foot of man hath ever trodden; below, they are belted by the dark, thick bush, penetrable only by the wild beast or the savage; the broad plain is covered with aloes, Cape heaths, wild stocks, and ten thousand variegated shrubs, which make a carpet beneath our feet as beautiful as the canopy of heaven above our heads; and close beside us is a little spot worthy of the pencil of a Salvator Rosa,—the dark foliage of the bush lighted up by our fire, around which are stretched the dusky forms of our Hottentots, enjoying, as only a savage knows how thoroughly to enjoy, the exquisite delight of the *dolce far' niente*.

We meditate on railroads, and Macadam, and civilization; on stage-coaches and postchaises; on inns and hotels, and heavy bills and feather-beds—glorious things all! But we are in a poetical humour, and in spite of bad roads, slow travelling, rough fare, and a bed *al fresco*, we decide that we never enjoyed an European trip so

heartily as this South African wandering. We have no travelling companion but the beauties of nature around us, yet we are satisfied. We have none to hold converse with, save with our own thoughts and reflections; high and holy as such scenes and such companionship have called forth from the recesses of our mind, yet never did we find conversation so entrancing or so profitable: we feel at peace with God and man!

I by no means assert, however, that a wagon journey always goes as smoothly as this; many are the ills and inconveniences to which the wanderer is occasionally subject; for example, you may arrive at the banks of a river, usually a little babbling brook no higher than your ancles, but now a broad, deep, roaring torrent, from the rains which have lately fallen in the interior among the mountains, whence it takes its source. There is no bridge, no ferry; you have nothing to do but to wait, with what philosophy you may, till the waters have subsided, and the stream is once again fordable: this will probably be in three or four days, or a week's time; and you are lucky if you have a commissariat that will last out this extra time. I knew a married couple on their wedding tour, who were thus brought to a stop for *six weeks*—a pleasant honey-moon.

Occasionally, if you do not keep a very sharp watch, you will pass near some canteen or road-side inn; your Hottentots will smell it out; and while you are shooting, or smoking, or reading during the "out-span," they will go and get so drunk that it is perfectly hopeless to think of moving that day; you can only avenge yourself a little by giving them a good thrashing (if the day be not too warm for such exercise), and determining to stop their "baccy" to-morrow: if you carry out the last resolution, they will, probably, accidentally upset you in your wagon at the next river you cross.

Or, as you are waiting for the oxen, and thinking how late it is getting the same interesting blackies will inform you that they can see nothing of the oxen in any direction. You are in a rage, but you start off to search for them yourself. After knocking yourself up, you return to your wagon without success. You threaten frightful pains and penalties if the oxen are not found soon: it is useless, they are by this time in the "pound," some ten miles off, placed there by some ill-tempered land-owner, on whose farm they have been trespassing, having probably got into his corn-ground, and enjoyed an unwonted feast. Of all this you are informed, next day, by the choleric

landowner himself, who presents you with a bill for the damage done by your vagrant "span," which bill you must inevitably pay before the oxen can be released and restored to you.

Another inconvenience, with very little of the ludicrous in it, is the occasional want of water while travelling, after a long drought. We, in England, have not much to boast of in the way of navigable streams; but we know little of the want of water for agricultural purposes. "A never-failing spring" of water, on a Cape farm, is a great attraction in an auctioneer's advertisement; and though, probably, the said stream may be a miserable little affair, it will almost double the price of the farm that possesses it. Artesian wells are much talked of, but I never knew of one being sunk; even common wells are rare, though in almost every place water is found when bored for, at no great depth below the surface. On a great proportion of farms, the stock and their master depend entirely on the supply of water from the clouds, collected in the "vleys," or ponds, dug on their farms. A glass of this water is exactly the colour of pea-soup; and if you are a "griffin" in the colony, you will feel considerable hesitation in putting it to your lips; yet, when you come to travel much in the land, you

will often have to long in vain for the luxury of such a draught.

I was once travelling to Graaf Reinet in a wagon, and for eighteen hours my oxen had tasted no water; the poor brutes were consequently so faint and weary, that I began to despair of their living much longer; still it was necessary to urge them on, that we might come to some oasis in the desert. Suddenly the whole span of a dozen set up a roar, threw their tails straight up, and dashed along at a gallop. My first thought was a "lion," and I seized my double-barrelled gun to make ready; but in a few seconds my fears were allayed, for right a-head of us lay a large "vley" of water, to which the cattle were making at the top of their speed, and into which they dragged the wagon, and slaked their thirst without waiting for the ceremony of being out-spanned. They had scented the water long before they could see it. It is no uncommon thing for oxen to die on a journey when there has been a long-continued drought, which not only dries up the ponds but also the herbage, so that the unfortunate animals are starved to death.

My "leader," (as the boy is called who leads the two front oxen of the span), on my first wagon journey, was a Bushman; he was about four feet

high, and decidedly the ugliest specimen of the human race I ever beheld, without being deformed in body or limbs; the most *prominent* feature in his face was the mouth, with its huge, thick, sensual lips. The nose could scarcely be called a projection; at all events it was far less distinguishable in the outline of the side face than the mouth; it was an inverted (or concave) Roman, that is to say, the bridge formed a curve *inwards*, the nostrils were very wide and open, so that you seemed, by means of them, to look a considerable distance into his head. With regard to the eyes, I am guilty of no exaggeration when I assert, that you could not see the eyeballs at all as you looked at his profile, but only the hollows which contained them; it was like looking at a mask when the eyes of the wearer are far removed from the orifices cut for them in the pasteboard. The cheek-bones were immense, the cheeks thin and hollow; the forehead was low and shelving: in fact he could scarcely be said to have a forehead at all. He was two or three shades from being black, and he had even less hair on his head than his countrymen generally—it was composed of little tight woolly knots, with a considerable space of bare skin between each. So much for the young gentleman's features!

The expression was diabolically bad, and his disposition corresponded to it. I firmly believe that little wretch would have been guilty of any villany, or any cruelty, for the mere love of either. I found the only way to keep him in the slightest control, was to inspire him with bodily fear,—no easy task, seeing that his hide was so tough that your arms would ache long before you produced any keen sense of pain by thrashing him. On one occasion, the wagon came to the brow of a hill, when it was the duty of the leader to stop the oxen, and see that the wheel was well locked. It may readily be imagined that a wagon which requires twelve oxen to draw it on level ground, could not be held back at all by *two* oxen, in its descent down a steep hill, unless with the wheel locked.

My interesting Bushman, however, whom I had not yet offended in any manner, no sooner found himself at the top of the hill, than he let go the oxen with a yell and a "whoop" which set them off at a gallop down the precipitous steep. The wagon flew from side to side of the road, destined, apparently, to be smashed to atoms every moment, together with myself, its luckless occupant. I was dashed about almost unconscious of what could be the cause, so suddenly had

we started on our mad career. Heaven only knows how I escaped destruction, but we positively reached the bottom of the hill uninjured.

The Bushman was by the wagon-side in an instant, and went to his place at the oxen's heads as coolly and unconcernedly as if he had just performed part of his ordinary duties. The Hottentot driver, on the contrary, came panting up, and looking aghast with horror at the fear he had felt. I jumped out of the wagon, seized my young savage by the collar of his jacket, and with a heavy sea-cow-hide whip I belaboured him with all my strength, wherein, I trust, the reader will think me justified, as the little wretch had made the most barefaced attempt on my life. I almost thought my strength would be exhausted before I could get a sign from the young gentleman that he felt my blows, but at length he uttered a yell of pain, and I knew he had had enough. Next day I dropped him at a village, and declined his further services.

These Bushmen are, I suppose, the most degraded race of mortals on the face of the globe. They live in their own country in a state of the most perfect barbarism, without clothes, huts, or even food such as any other mortals would eat. I have before alluded to their eating locusts. As

to planting any corn or vegetables, the very idea seems unknown to them. Yet they have their own arts too. They can smelt and weld the iron they find on the surface of the ground, and form points of it for their arrows. They understand, too, the first branch of science a savage learns—that of poisons. Into poison they plunge their arrows, and when they kill an animal by means of them, they at once cut out the poisoned part. They appear to be almost incapable of civilization : at all events they show less signs of civilization's work than any other tribe in South Africa. Their language is hideous, worse even than the Hottentot, to which it bears a strong resemblance.

The Hottentot is evidently of the same family, but he is rather a finer animal, and slightly superior in mental capacity. Unfortunately, civilization has not done much for him. Were we to believe all that missionary meetings tell us in England, we should imagine that the benefits conferred by the missionaries on society in South Africa were beyond all price. I am sorry to be obliged to protest against any such supposition. I am well aware that these well-meaning gentlemen could bring a wonderful array of figures against me : but perhaps no two

things differ more widely than "figures" and "facts." Out of every hundred Hottentot Christians (so-called) I will venture to declare that ninety-nine are utterly ignorant of any correct notion of a future state. I speak from experience. I have frequently been by the bed-side of the sick and dying Hottentot, who has been a constant attendant at some missionary chapel, and I have asked him whether he has any fear of dying. He has smiled, and said,

"None."

I have asked him whether he expects to go to heaven? and he has answered,

"No."

"Where then?"

"Nowhere."

I have endeavoured to explain to him that his minister must have taught him the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments. He has laughed, and said, that perhaps it might be so for "the master, but not for him; he lies down and dies, that is all,—that is enough." This I have heard over and over again from the lips of some of the "pet" Christians of missionaries, — model men, whom they talk of and point out to every "griffin" in

the colony, and write long communications about to their societies in England.

The reader, then, will naturally inquire, why these men pretend to be Christians at all? I will answer him. There are two grand inducements,—in the first place, the Hottentot Christian feels himself a more important person, from the notice taken of him by the missionaries and their friends: in the second place, it is of very great pecuniary advantage to him. Each missionary station has a tract of land belonging to it, on which are built the chapel, the school-house, the minister's residence, &c. A Hottentot has only to go and attend the school and chapel regularly, and to play the devout well, when he will be allowed to erect a hut on the land, and a small piece of ground will be given him as a garden. He will be supplied with implements and seeds, and by doing a little work about once a week he can thus live all the rest of the time in idleness. In a country where labour is so dear, he can at any time earn a few shillings on the nearest farm, if he wants any little luxury, and will condescend to do a day's work. But it is notorious, that these people, living at the missionary stations, are the idlest and most useless set of people in the colony. I once knew a man who,

at a sale, purchased sixty or seventy head of cattle. He wanted a herd or two to drive them home to his farm,—a couple of days' journey off. He rode to a missionary station hard by, and offered, first, *fair* wages to any two men who would come with him; he then increased his offers (seeing an unwillingness on the part of the people) till they became absurdly large. No one would stir, though there were dozens living there in utter idleness, and with no ties but those of sheer laziness to detain them. He then called on the missionary, and begged him to intercede and persuade two men to accompany him. That gentleman, however, declined to interfere: and when my friend asked him whether he thought he was conferring a benefit on the Hottentots by encouraging them in idle habits, he replied, that he never interfered save for their "spiritual" advantage, which he thought would be more secured by their remaining in that peaceful spot, —where by the way, promiscuous intercourse between the sexes was winked at, if not absolutely sanctioned.

My friend rode away, leaving two or three dozen able-bodied men behind him, living in a state of complete idleness, and yet unable to procure even two "for love or money" to drive home

his cattle. Like a sensible fellow, he did it himself.

The consequence of this system is, that you cannot frighten a farmer more seriously than by telling him that a missionary station is going to be established near him. Visions of daily desertion by his servants float across his mind's eye, and he feels strongly inclined to devote all missionaries to a place which is occasionally coupled with "Connaught."

CHAPTER IX.

GRAHAM'S TOWN.—THE CAPE PROBLEM.—ABSURDITY OF ITS SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.—A REMEDY IN THE "PATCHING" STYLE.—EXTENT OF GRAHAM'S TOWN.—ITS BUILDINGS.—RELIGIOUS SECTS.—THEIR CHARACTERISTICS. — FRONTIER TRADE. — DEALINGS WITH THE NATIVE TRIBES.—HOW TO CIVILIZE THEM.—WANT OF GOOD HARBOURS AT THE CAPE.—AN EMBARRASSMENT.—AN INDIAN IN SEARCH OF HEALTH.—A LUCKY DOCTOR.—A FRONTIER BALL.—FANCY COSTUMES. — SMALL TALK *à-l'Africaine*. — ENERGETIC DANCING.—SUPPER AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

GRAHAM'S Town is the capital of the eastern province of the Cape Colony; until lately it was the seat of a Lieutenant-governor, whose office was abolished in consequence of its inutility; at least with the restricted powers that had been entrusted to it.

The only "difficulty" in governing the Cape Colony is in dealing with the frontier question; the restless, thievish Kafirs are always on the look-out to commit depredations, and, occasionally, violence. To establish such relations between these people and the colonists as will prevent or check this propensity on the part of the

former, is, of course, "the Cape problem." It might have been foreseen by any reasonable man, that a respectable old military gentleman residing in Cape Town, six or seven hundred miles from the Kafir frontier, surrounded by a legislative council, composed of placemen, an attorney-general, and three or four rich shopkeepers, were not exactly the body to *solve* such a problem. In simple truth, they knew no more of the Kafirs, or of the frontier, and had little more interest in the matter at stake than the Marylebone Vestry. Six hundred miles, too, be it remembered, in South Africa, is nearly a week's work by the post. Imagine the absurdity of a frontier daily and hourly exposed to the chances of an attack from a savage nation, its neighbour, having to send six hundred miles and wait a fortnight for instructions what to do! The joke became too serious at last. The frontier farmers growled so loudly that the echoes reached England. The remedy was simple—fix the seat of government in Graham's Town.

But patching and cobbling are the order of the day with governments in dealing with the most vital questions at home or in the colonies; instead of sending the governor of the colony to reside at Graham's Town, with his placemen and

his attorney-general, dismissing the shopkeeper legislators to their counters, and establishing the representative system throughout the land, they send a *lieutenant*-governor to the Eastern province. The simple colonists, good men, were pleased at this boon, though it was not exactly what they wanted.

The lieutenant-governor was fixed at Graham's Town, and soon found that his office was to be no sinecure, if the colonists had their way. Complaints of depredations, of robbery, of violence, of murder even, poured in daily: Kafirs became daily more insolent, and their chiefs more daring and contemptuous of British prowess. Memorials were addressed to the lieutenant-governor, praying him to take some steps against the aggressors, for government had long ago prevented the colonists from redressing their own grievances. No answer came to the memorials; there was evidently a "hitch" somewhere; the secret oozed out at last: no *discretion* was left to the lieutenant-governor; no *responsibility* was his; he was to refer to the governor at Cape Town before he acted! therefore he was merely a kind of animated letter-box, to which to take letters and memorials intended for his excellency the governor, or a secretary through whom his excel-

lency's replies shall be delivered to the appellants; he was positively worse than useless—he was an impediment and a nuisance;—he was endured, nevertheless, like many another nuisance at home and abroad, for some years. At length he has passed away, not unregretted perhaps, because some sanguine individual imagined that his powers would be extended, and that eventually the eastern province would be erected into a separate colony; but all confessed that with his then existing powers (or rather the lack of any), he was an expensive piece of lumber.

Since the abolition of this office, Graham's Town has, however, still continued to be the head-quarters of the troops in the frontier; and the brave old Colonel (now General) Somerset, who is commander-in-chief in that district, has his own residence, close to the town. On approaching Graham's Town you are impressed with the idea that you are entering a large town, from the great extent of ground over which the houses are scattered; but it is really only the *skeleton* of a large town. The streets are immensely broad, and the houses generally built with large spaces between them and gardens behind: so that it would be quite possible to treble the number of houses without enlarging the municipal limits:

it only contains about six thousand inhabitants, and as many hundred houses.

Across the centre of the main street stands the ugliest church we ever beheld, looking all the more ungainly in its proportions from the very prominence of its position. The only decent building in the town is the Catholic Church, which is really a very creditable structure. If Voltaire sneered at the "twenty religions" of England, what would he have said to the same number in a town or village of six thousand inhabitants?—yet, I verily believe, that Graham's Town can boast of about that number. Amongst them are: Church of England, Dutch Church, Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, Moravians, Quakers, Catholics, and Jews, with others, whose names and tenets I am shamefully unacquainted with.

The Church of England party are the "aristocratic" sect; the Wesleyans, the "serious" one, who seldom visit members of the other, and look on them with an eye of pity for their worldliness. The Baptists are the "intellectual" sect, or were so, headed by their minister till he was caught tripping in so serious a manner, that the residue of his days were destined to be spent in jail, to the great scandal of his followers. The Inde-

pendents are the very "radical" sect, celebrated for getting up scenes at vestry and municipal meetings, &c. The Catholics are steadily progressing in numbers, and make, I verily believe, more *genuine* converts among the coloured classes than any other sect. The Jews are just what they are in England—I leave the reader to supply their character, my own description would scarcely be flattering.

The consequence of this multitude of "persuasions," and the party feeling it engenders, is that Graham's Town is by no means so agreeable a place for a resident or a stranger as it might be; he finds less of that warm-hearted hospitality he had been accustomed to elsewhere in the colony, especially if he comes from Port Elizabeth.

Graham's Town is the key to the trade which is carried on with the interior of Southern Africa, beyond the colonial boundary. This trade is even now very lucrative, but might be extended to an immense degree; it is carried on in the most slovenly and unsystematic manner, and by only a few adventurers. Probably the chief obstacle to a well-regulated system of commerce with the native tribes beyond the Border, is the constant dread of a fresh outbreak among the

Kafirs. At present there are a few men who load two or three wagons with coarse cloths, calicos, guns, tobacco, beads, brass curtain-rings (a favorite ornament on the arms of the natives), sugar, &c. With these wagons they cross the colonial boundary, and travel about among the native tribes, much in the style of "Cheap-Johns" in the rural districts of England. When they "do business," they seldom get money in exchange for their goods, coin being decidedly scarce in the Desert; but they receive ivory, karosses of wild animal's skins, ostrich feathers, native arms, and other curiosities, and occasionally cattle. With these they return to the colony, after an absence of probably six months, and seldom fail to clear five or six hundred, or a thousand pounds, by their venture.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the advantages that must accrue to the savage tribes across the border, if, instead of this desultory and uncertain kind of trading, a few regular stations were established among them, where they might at all times procure the ordinary necessaries of a civilized life. Let them once find such things *necessaries* (as they inevitably would, after a few years), and they would cease to attack those through whose means alone they were able to

procure them. At present the Kafir can do without us; he drinks pure water; he eats bruised Kafir corn and milk; he dresses in nothing at all—or, if he sports any habiliments, they consist only of the hide of an ox, and a few beads round his neck. He certainly finds us useful in one respect, and that is, in having a good stock of cattle to which he can, and does, help himself whenever he wants any. But then he sees, that if he could thrash us and drive us all into the sea (as he threatens), he could take *all* the cattle at once, without the inconvenience of having to drive it away so often. If he loved tea and sugar, and wore shirts and shoes, he would feel that he was dependent on us for the supply of such things, and his native sagacity would show him the absurdity of destroying us. Moreover, few will doubt that the virtues of civilization can only be implanted in those who have first acquired a taste for the material comforts of a civilized mode of life.

The situation of Graham's Town is not the most convenient in respect to the importation of goods. For this purpose Port Elizabeth is its port; but as the latter place is a hundred miles off, and the goods have to be conveyed all the way in ox-wagons, over vile roads, the transit

is neither speedy nor convenient. It is true that attempts have been made to establish another landing place at Port Francis, the mouth of the Kowie river, which is only about twenty-five miles distant. The experiment has not had much success, on account of a bar of sand at the river's mouth, so that more vessels have been wrecked in attempting to navigate the stream than the value of the place seems very likely to equal. The want of fine natural harbours is, indeed, the great defect of the Cape Colony. Art may do much to remedy it hereafter; but in the meantime it is a great ill, and one calculated seriously to retard the progress of the colony. Many writers, whose books are mere puffs of the Cape or of some portion of it, endeavour to slur over this fact, or to represent places as safe, which are notoriously otherwise. They boast that Algoa Bay can contain "the navy of the world"—so can the Indian Ocean outside, and in far more safety; for I would rather be in a typhoon in the Eastern seas than at anchor in that same Algoa Bay during a terrific south-easter.

They tell us, too, of a man in a decked boat having once navigated the Zwartkops River, a stream flowing into the same bay; but they omit to add that he (or, at least, his vessel) never got

out again. The truth is, that the New River in Middlesex is a far more navigable stream for anything, from a wherry to a seventy-four, than any river in South Africa.

I began this chapter from Graham's Town, but I fear I am greatly wandering from my theme. However, the reader will perceive that I make no pretence to a systematic arrangement of my materials; so I must trust to his patience if at times I canter off with him too rapidly from one subject to another. To confess the truth, I find myself very much in the same predicament, now that I have got into Graham's Town, *on paper*, as I did when I entered it *bodily*,—I don't know what to do, or which way to turn. My doubt, let me explain, by no means arises from an *embarras de richesses* in materials for observation, or information, or amusement; but positively from the dearth of anything pleasing or instructive in the place.

"Why then did you go there?" cries the reader.

"One must see *the Capital* of the country one journeys in," responds the author; a reply wherewith the reader is only half-satisfied. At all events it seems to him, that I had no right to take *him* there after having been disgusted with

the place myself. I know a man who was once induced to walk three miles on a wet day, to see that dreadful little caricature of the sublime, that wretched little mudheap of a precipice, with its little gutter overflowing the top — Blackgang Chine in the Isle of Wight. Since that period he has taken a savage pleasure in talking about the beauties of the place, and sending all his friends there. It is with no such ill-intention that I have carried my reader to Graham's Town. But as I owe him the *amende* for my prosiness on the subject of that delectable town, I will beg him to accompany me to a grand ball there. Perhaps we may find something more entertaining in this scene.

A wealthy old Indian officer, with excellent appointments in the Company's service, is travelling in the colony for the benefit of his health. He goes to every doctor in every town, and takes all they prescribe, but finds himself no better. His malady is that produced by good living in a tropical climate. At length he falls in with a shrewd apothecary from "the north countrie," who sees at a glance that the old gentleman only wants air and exercise; but not being an Abernethy, he is not blunt enough to say so. He prescribes, of course, the mildest and most inno-

cent of pills and draughts, and sends his patient for a long canter every day. The patient gets well, and his gratitude is immense—his admiration of the apothecary's professional skill is unbounded. He forthwith writes him a check for one thousand pounds, and invites him with his wife and all his family to accompany him back to Bombay, when he shall return thither. Meanwhile, in an ecstacy of delight, he journeys about the country, and gives balls to everybody everywhere. To-night he gives us one at Graham's Town.

We enter a large, long room in the Hotel indicated, at about nine o'clock. The company are nearly all assembled; for when they do get a ball at the Cape, and especially at Graham's Town, they take time by the forelock, being considerably in doubt when they may chance to see another. This one is a very grand affair, for it is a "fancy" and full-dress ball. The characters are not very grand, but they are not bad in their way. Here is a Kafir chief—at least the costume of one—observe the cloak, or kaross, of leopard skin, and the string of leopard's tails hanging down in front: see the beads round his head, and the feathers projecting therefrom; regard the war assagais he holds in his hands—very fearful

looking affairs—and the knobbed-stick (or knob-keerie) wherewith he is supposed to crack his enemies' skulls. You will observe that his costume is decidedly scanty, but he has contrived, with great ingenuity, to make it decent—a point in which he differs remarkably from the individual he represents.

Here comes an old Boer in blue linen trousers, rolled up at the ancles, veltschoens (or grass-shoes, so called from their being made of soft leather, and adapted only for walking on turf, and not on stony roads), short brown moleskin jacket, below which appears a larger *de quoi s'asseoir*, than any fat old major in a shell jacket could display, and a hat made of rushes, with a brim of the true "donkey-race" width.

Next is a very slender youth, with the lightest and most sickly of moustaches struggling into existence on his upper lip, a green braided jacket, with a hussar ditto of black sheepskin dangling over his left shoulder, a crimson sash and—— but *this* gentleman is not in fancy costume; he is one of his country's gallant defenders—an officer of the Cape Mounted Rifles; we beg his pardon for our mistake.

What thing is that whirling round in a waltz —now black and now white?—It is a gentleman

representing "Time:" his "frontispiece" is a clock.

But this is tiresome; let us turn to the ladies. Alas! they don't look so brilliant in complexion as in Old England. The sun is a terrible destroyer of bloom on a maiden's cheek;—still there are some pretty damsels among them, and not so badly "got-up" for the land of the Desert. We ask one to dance, and she accepts.

Now comes the puzzle. What the deuce is a man to talk about in a Cape ball-room? There is neither opera nor theatre, nor park, nor concerts, nor court, nor news; even the weather—that eternal refuge for the destitute of small-talk—won't do in a country where it is always fine. We wish we could think of something entertaining. We begin to quiz some of the company (dangerous by the way, as you may chance to select your partner's brother, or husband, or papa for your shafts of ridicule); but we find the young lady has not taste for the humorous. We talk about the beauty of the scene: the shortest monosyllable issues from the fair one's lips, and all is silent again. We begin to suspect we are very stupid, and feel proportionately uncomfortable. A bright idea strikes us!

"Do you live in the town, or in the country?"

"In the country."

We hesitate a moment, and then making a plunge, we say,—

"How many head of cattle have you got ?"

What a start for a ball-room confab with a pretty girl! No matter, it was at all events successful!

"And success
Is much in all things, but especially in youth."

No sooner had that magic question passed our lips than the fair one's lips were opened also, and forth poured a torrent of information, touching cows and sheep, the breeding and rearing them, the milking and shearing thereof, and such a quantity of practical farming observations, that we half expected she would offer to "deal" with us if we were disposed to make an investment in the butter or wool line. Perhaps the reader will think we were disgusted—not a bit of it; it was genuine nature: and besides, the girl was talking on a subject she understood, a thing which her sisters in England very seldom do in a ball-room, or anywhere else perchance. *Fi donc!* I am getting on to dangerous ground. By the way, what a God-send for the bashful and nervous, and the slow of speech at a ball, was the Great Exhibition! The most miserable and desolate of

"wallflowers" will find something to say for a year or two.

Until I went to a ball at the Cape, I never knew what thorough enjoyment of dancing was. The Africanders, blessings on their simple souls, don't walk through a quadrille, or glide through a polka; but they pound away with feet and arms, and the "orient humour" oozing from each pore of face, and hands, and neck, bears witness to the energy of their movements.

And then the supper!—Your partner does not take a little piece of trifle, or a cream, or a tart, and sip a thimble-spoonful of negus, but she demolishes all the chicken and ham you give her, and drinks every drop of the three bumpers of champagne you pour out for her, and looks all the happier for both. As for yourself, you attack everything you can lay hands on; and, after the ladies have retired, you find yourself actually indulging in that highly dangerous and deleterious practice of "hurrahing" in response to the toast of the "ladies," which that fat man in a red face and a white waistcoat, with an uncomfortable tendency to work its way up to his chin, has just proposed. You find, too, that you come down again to that same supper-room after the fair ones have begun to depart for their homes; you

find that you prefer brandy-and-water to doubtful champagne and suspicious claret; you find that you have a cigar in your pocket, and you smoke it; you find that you can sing capitally—in a chorus; and lastly, if you *do* find your way home—you are a lucky fellow.

CHAPTER X.

THE ROAD TO FORT BEAUFORT.—DEPARTURE FROM GRAHAM'S TOWN. —FISH RIVER BUSH.—AGREEABLE MILITARY DUTY FOR A "SUB." —KAFIRS AND CANNON-BALLS.—A DENSE FOREST.—A ROADSIDE INN. — MINE HOST. — AN INTERESTING MOUNTAIN. — A GRAND PANORAMA.—FORT BEAUFORT.—CLIMATE.—MACOMO THE GREAT CHIEF.—HIS CHARACTER AND TALENTS.—MY FIRST INTERVIEW WITH HIM.—ELEGANT COSTUME.—AN INVITATION.—THE KAFIRS DESCRIBED.—ALBINOS.—A HIGHWAY ROBBERY.—MACOMO'S KRAAL. —OUR *tête-à-tête*.—PUZZLING INQUIRY TOUCHING HER GRACIOUS MAJESTY.—A HAREM.—A BARGAIN.—RETURN TO FORT BEAUFORT.

THE best road in the eastern province of the Cape colony, is that which leads from Graham's Town to Fort Beaufort. It is entirely artificial, forty-five miles in extent, and cut through the awkwardest looking country that engineer ever had to deal with. The direction of the work rested in Major Selwyn, R.E., but the immediate superintendence of it in Mr. A. G. Bain, Assistant Engineer.

Over this road I cantered in solitude, right glad to escape from the dulness of Graham's Town —its gentlemen shopkeepers, dreary streets, and

inhospitable houses. I was going, too, to have my first look at Kafirland, and some of those mysterious chiefs, whose names excited a constant terror and indignation in the hearts of frontier farmers. And here let me explain, that, by "terror," I merely mean the fear of losing their stock through the thievish propensities of the black gentry; but I by no means insinuate that the worthy farmers are afraid of the Kafirs as enemies, provided they have full and free permission to "pitch into them" when they please, and teach them the lesson they most require to learn. In this case I have no hesitation in saying, that the colonists of the border would very soon settle the Kafir question—a desideratum which Sir Harry Smith will never attain.

The first part of my road lay over table-land skirting Graham's Town on the east. At about eight miles distance it crosses a stony bit called Governor's Kop, and then dives into that immense jungle called the Fish River Bush. One of the greatest benefits that could be conferred on the eastern province, would be the entire destruction of this bush by fire. But I fear it will not burn; and so it will continue to harbour wild beasts in peace, and Kafirs in war time. All the Kafir nation could hide in it, and be out of sight and

out of reach of English eyes or English bullets. At the first symptoms of an impending attack on the colony, the report always flies like wild-fire, "The Fish River Bush is full of Kafirs."

Some luckless lieutenant of the Cape Mounted Rifles is then sent forth with thirty or forty, or fifty men, "to scour the bush." He starts off very valorously, if he has never had that same duty to perform before; he gets into a defile, where he is shot at for half an hour without seeing the ghost of a Kafir; three or four of his men are killed; he finds it utterly impossible to penetrate six yards into any portion of the bush; and he comes back in a great fright at not having executed an impossible order; standing a good chance of being reprimanded into the bargain.

A field-piece or two, or a howitzer, might be of some service; for the Kafirs have shown a remarkable distaste for cannon-balls; but any force of men who are not naked, greased all over, and able to creep along on their stomachs, are of little avail in bush-fighting with savages who have all the above qualifications.

My road now wound round thickly wooded and precipitous hills, which have been scarped (though of solid rock), to form a perfectly secure and sub-

stantial road. It was a strange sight to stop and look back at some sudden turn of the road. It appeared as if I was alone in the midst of a dense forest, without a track visible ; below my feet lay a deep chasm, all thick and impenetrable bush ; above my head, before me, and all round me, rose mountains covered with the same gloomy-looking forest; and when I began to think on the creatures that dwell in its dark recesses, the wolf, the leopard, the lion, the elephant, and worse than all, the Kafir lurking for rapine, it struck me that I was by no means so secure as regarded my personal safety, as if I were cantering in Rotten Row in "the leafy month of June."

Although the road winds down hill the greater portion of its extent, the inclination is so gradual, and the surface (for a Cape road) so remarkably smooth, that you can canter all the way without discomposing sensitive nerves. After clearing the bush, from which I confess I was not sorry to emerge, the road crosses the Fish river itself, and three miles further the Konap river. Here, then, is the unwonted luxury of a roadside inn—so I treated my horse to some corn, and myself to some refreshment, and took a mid-day *siesta.*

A man loses a great deal of information on a journey, who neglects to talks to his host at his

inn, more especially in a country where inns and hosts are scarce articles. I found the good man here very communicative, and learnt a considerable number of stories illustrative of Kafir treachery and cunning.

"You have been in Kafirland, sir?" said he inquiringly.

"Never."

"Then, of course, you don't know what *that* is?" he added, pointing to a distant lofty hill or mountain.

I intimated that it looked to my uninformed vision extremely like a mountain.

"Exactly so, sir; but you see that same mountain is a very noted place. It is in the territory of the Kafir chief, Macomo. Now, sir, when that rascal wants to attack the Colony, or his neighbours, the other chiefs, he lights a great fire on the top of that hill at night, and, on seeing it, every Kafir in his dominions immediately flocks to his standard—and he can collect ten thousand armed men, sir!"

I uttered a sincere wish that it might be a long time before Macomo's fire was lighted again; but my host seemed to think we should see, or hear of, its blaze pretty soon. He was not far wrong.

Bidding adieu to my host, I started again on my road, which now wound up the Konap hills. On reaching the summit, I had a magnificent view of the immense mountain chain which stretches from Graaf Reinet, on the west, to the furthest extremity of Kafirland on the north-east, and parallel to the coast—or over about six degrees of longitude, and as many of latitude. This was *before* me; behind me lay the plains I had just quitted, the Konap and the Fish rivers running like glass threads through the dark jungle that surrounded them.

For the next twenty miles into Fort Beaufort, the road passes on the left, one of the most valuable pastoral tracks of country in South Africa. Cattle and sheep thrive here wonderfully, and especially the latter. But think of the delights of farming with a whole nation of insatiable thieves within a mile or two of you!

I cannot call Fort Beaufort a pretty town; and although I might say something about substantial dwelling-houses, a good inn, extensive barracks, broad streets, &c., I shall be nearer the mark in describing it as a most convenient military station of the most unsightly appearance, and exposed to such terrific heat in the summer, that, like Gibraltar, the soldiers' buttons may be said to melt

and drop off there. A great peculiarity in the Cape climate is, that it is always healthy, even in these desperately hot places. I account for it thus:—during the day there will, probably, be no wind, and the sun will pour down with intense force on the luckless inhabitants of the town; or else a breeze will blow from the north, which, coming direct from the sandy deserts of the interior, will be literally scorching. On these occasions people shut themselves up in their houses, close every door and window, and wait till the unpleasant visitation is over. Now and then they are enlivened by their tables, or their chairs, or sometimes their street-door, splitting in two during the infliction. At length the wind veers, and a north-wester comes forth with a violence that beggars description—the air is cool in two minutes, and though clouds of sand may fly, and occasionally a few tiles and chimney-pots* also, still it clears the atmosphere, and drives away all impurities engendered by the intense heat of the morning. Extreme sultriness, or a hot wind, never lasts many hours at the Cape.

Forty-five miles on horseback, though a very moderate day's ride in South Africa, is quite

* I have more than once seen the entire roof of a substantially built house lifted off by one of these N.W. winds.

sufficient to make a man enjoy a night's rest after it. I slept soundly my first night in Fort Beaufort, albeit I dreamt of Kafirs, and bonfires, and bush-fighting, and wild beasts. Next morning I walked forth in the hopes of meeting some Kafirs, who are very fond of strolling into the town. I was soon gratified with the information, that the great Macomo was in the town. Before I describe him as I saw him, I will just tell something of his deeds and character.

Macomo was at this time the most powerful chief in Kafirland, with the exception, probably, of Sandilli, whom, however, he far surpassed in abilities. I have already said that he could bring about ten thousand men into the field. All of these men would be well armed—many (perhaps most) with guns, and some two thousand mounted. He was a man of great natural sagacity; superior in this respect to the rest of his countrymen, of whom, in other qualities, he might be regarded as the type. He was cunning, avaricious, dishonest to an excess, vicious in his tendencies, and false in every relation of life. In a word, he was a thief, a sot, a liar, and, in some respects, a coward. And such is the Kafir!

When Sir George Napier (once Governor of the Cape) made "a progress" through the Colony, he

called a meeting of the Kafir chiefs, in order to hear from them their opinions of the relations subsisting between themselves and the colonists. On this occasion Macomo addressed his Excellency in a speech of three hours' duration, in which he took so sensible and masterly a view of the subject, explained his own views so clearly, dilated on the advantages of peace so strongly, and expressed his own determination to maintain an amicable feeling between his people and the colony so forcibly, that his hearers were not only amazed at his knowledge and his eloquence, but most completely "bamboozled" by his protestations. Yet, at that very time, the scoundrel was daily helping himself, through means of his people, to the herds, and flocks, and studs of the colonists. He had four hundred horses, which *must* have come from the colony, though he had never been known to purchase one. He has been false to us in every successive outbreak, and ought, most assuredly, to have been hanged last war as an example to his fellows; but Sir Harry Smith was contented with putting his foot on the fellow's neck, and talking "big," instead of putting a halter *round* it, and saying,—"This is the punishment of treachery, treason, and murder."

Macomo, however, has since taken his revenge,

by maintaining his position in his native hills, in spite of all Sir Harry's efforts to dislodge him. It is amusing enough to see how Sir Harry always gains a victory, and yet the Kafirs do not budge an inch. Methinks a Kafir Gazette, with Macomo's dispatches and general orders, would tell us strange tales.

And now for my own interview with the great chief.

The proper dress of a Kafir chief is a kaross of leopard skin, which can be worn by no other Kafir. Arms, legs, and feet, are left bare, and so is the head. Macomo, however, is very fond of turning out in European costume; and as he selects his wardrobes in a very diffusive manner, the effect he produces is more remarkable than elegant. Judge of my surprise at seeing the great leader of ten thousand warriors thus habited. He wore a blue dress-coat with brass buttons, considerably too large for him, and very much the worse for wear; a pair of old Dragoon trousers, with a tarnished gold stripe down the legs; yellow velt-schoens; a shocking bad straw hat; no shirt, no waistcoat, and no stockings! He was mounted on a little, rough, ungroomed pony, with a cheap saddle, and an old worn-out bridle. In place of a riding-whip, he carried in his hand a knob-

keerie of formidable dimensions, and in his mouth was stuck a small, blackened clay pipe. In addition to this, he was by no means sober, though not drunk "for Macomo," I was informed.

My interview with the worthy was not a very long one. I was introduced to him by a man who knew him, and I had a little conversation with him of no importance, but rather amusing, from the manner in which it ended,—namely, by the great chief asking me to lend him sixpence. Of course I complied, and saw him two hours later in a state of helpless intoxication. My sixpence had done it. You can get drunk on the most economical terms at the Cape.

Macomo, however, had given me a pressing invitation to visit him at his kraal, which is a very few miles from Fort Beaufort; and I determined to avail myself of the "honour."

Next morning I mounted my nag at about ten o'clock, and rode into Kafirland. It is strange how different the country looks after you have passed the colonial boundary; and the people you meet, albeit, of the same dusky hue as those you have left behind, are another people in person and expression of countenance.

The Kafir is certainly a fine animal. He is tall, well-knit, clean-limbed, and graceful in his

motions. It is rare to see a Kafir with any personal deformity, however trifling—I do not speak of lameness, hump-backs, &c., but of knock-knees, bow-legs, and such minor inelegancies, which so often mar the manly form among civilized nations. He has not the small hands and feet, and the delicately rounded ancles of the Hottentot; but he has a fine muscular arm, and a good calf to his leg. I have seen some dozen races of coloured people, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing the Kafirs by far the finest of them.

Their features are not Negro; though some of them (especially Macomo, who is the ugliest man in his dominions) partake very much of that character. High cheek-bones are universal; but very respectably shaped noses are sometimes met with, instead of the flattened "nigger" one. Their colour varies from almost black to a light copper hue. Their hair is tufted and woolly; but they are very fond of shaving the head.

Among the Kafirs I frequently met with Albinos. They are certainly the most repulsive looking creatures I ever beheld. Their skin is dead white—not the whiteness of a delicate European skin, but the colour of a white horse—it is scaly and coarse; their eyes are pink like

those of a ferret ; and their hair very much the colour of a ferret's coat, though, of course, still woolly and tufted. The scientific, I believe, account for these creatures' appearance, by imputing it to the absence of the " colouring-matter" under the skin, which, in Europeans, is of a light yellow-pinkish shade, in Asiatics of a copper-colour, and in a Negro of jet-black. They tell us that the epidermis itself is as white or colourless as a sheet of paper, and, therefore, without the " colouring-matter" beneath it, Europeans, Asiatics, and Negroes, would be alike—in fact, Albinos. I must say, that I prefer a genuine " nigger" to the latter.

Even in piping times of peace the Kafirs do not look kindly on an Englishman when they meet him in their territory ; and, as they scowl on you, holding their bundle of assagais, one of which would be quite enough to settle you at thirty yards' distance, they are very unpleasant-looking customers.

I had no fear of being murdered by them, but I thought it quite possible that they might take a fancy to my horse, saddle, and bridle, and personal habiliments, and help themselves to them *sans cérémonie*. I therefore adopted the plan of asking them the way to Macomo's kraal, feeling

quite certain that they would not venture to rob a visitor to their chief.

A few months later, an officer of Engineers was riding unarmed from Graham's Town to Fort Beaufort. Three Kafirs sprang out of the bush and seized his bridle, requesting him to dismount. Seeing that it would be madness to refuse the polite invitation, he complied. The Kafirs then took his money and his watch; he made some attempt to detain the latter, as he valued it, when one of the savages caught him a blow on the shins with his knob-keerie, which "dropped" him. As they were all armed also with assagais, he thought it prudent to offend them no further. They took his coat and hat, and his saddle and bridle—but *not* his horse; because the fellows well knew that the "spoor" might be followed, the horse identified, and those in whose possession it was found, given up to justice, as, by the treaties with the chiefs, they were required to be. They were just at this time acting very cautiously. The officer begged back his pocket-handkerchief —not because he had a cold, but to tie it round his horse's head, and lead him with it. And, in this comfortable manner, he crawled along the hot road for many a weary mile after the Kafirs had left him, rejoicing that he had saved his nag

by means of his rescued handkerchief. The perpetrators of this outrage were never discovered.

But here I am in sight of Macomo's kraal. It was very much like a homestead in the colony. There was the long, low, white-washed house, the cone-shaped huts round it, the cattle kraals, and the fifty or sixty yelping curs. I was requested to off-saddle, and a Kafir knee-haltered my horse for me and turned him to graze, while I entered the house and sat down with the chieftain. The table was then spread, beefsteaks, coffee, and meelies, forming the entertainment. I fully expected to find plenty of "Cape Smoke" in the house of so notorious a tippler as Macomo; but there was not a drop. I believe that he seldom drinks at home, but pays a visit to Fort Beaufort whenever he wishes to get drunk, which averages about three or four times a week. Macomo was far more inclined to "draw me out" than to be communicative, and therefore our conversation was not over entertaining. But the organ of acquisitiveness, so tremendously developed, physically and morally, in this Kafir, led him to dilate on the excellence of his horses; and he was very anxious to find out whether I wanted to purchase any. On my declining that, he turned to the subject of cattle, and sounded my

views in that direction : but I had not the slightest intention of "dealing" with him, especially as I might chance to be purchasing some of my own friends' stolen stock—and so my host was obliged to give up mercantile views altogether.

I asked him rather abruptly whether he thought the Kafirs would go to war again with the English. Nothing could exceed the humility with which he deprecated the idea. "The English were so powerful, and so good ; the Kafirs were so poor and so weak ; besides, the English were so kind to the Kafirs, and they, poor fellows, felt so grateful." I knew the rascal was perfectly well aware that I did not believe a word that he was saying ; but, of course, I looked quite satisfied of his sincerity. He then asked me the most puzzling questions about England and the Queen ; whom, by the way, he flatteringly termed his "mother." (I doubt whether her Majesty would be proud of her son.) He asked me how many cows she had—a matter on which I was shamefully ignorant, never having inquired into the extent of the royal farming stock. He asked me whether she was always dressed in scarlet and gold like the governor of the colony. Veracity compelled me to reply "No," though I was too loyal a subject to ven-

ture to lower her Majesty's dignity in the eyes of her worthy "son," by intimating that she occasionally wore muslin and straw bonnets. I *did* assure him, however, that she never dressed like his excellency, the governor; even her position as head of the army by no means compelling her to wear the garment peculiarly distinctive of the *male* sex among Europeans.

Macomo was very ready to insinuate evil against his neighbours, the other chiefs. Tola, Sandilli, and a few of such worthies, would not have felt flattered at his descriptions of their persons or their characters; though they are at least as honest, and far better-looking (excepting in the matter of Sandilli's withered leg), than their censor.

I began to talk about going back to Fort Beaufort, and my host seemed quite unhappy at the thoughts of parting with me, though I soon perceived that his grief arose from the circumstance of his having failed to make a bargain out of me. As I wanted to carry off some memento of so agreeable a visit, I expressed a very high admiration of a knob-keerie standing in the corner of the room. Macomo immediately offered it to me—for sixpence! I paid the money (of course without hinting at the little loan of

the previous day), and the Kafir's countenance brightened as he clutched the silver, and bade me a hearty farewell.

I rode back to Fort Beaufort, well pleased with my visit, but more than ever satisfied of the natural cunning, avarice, craft, and dishonesty—the low moral nature, and the utter untrustworthiness (if I may coin the word) of Kafirs in general, and, above all, of Macomo.

CHAPTER XI.

RELIGION OF THE KAFIRS.—THEIR SUPERSTITIONS.—DOCTORS AND PROPHETS.—ONE OF THE LATTER AT FAULT.—CEREMONIES.—A POOR LOVER.—HOW TO WIN A BRIDE.—A FAMER'S "COMPENSATION" FOR ROBBERY.—"EATING UP."—DEATH BY TORTURE.—JUSTICE.—THE MISSIONARIES IN KAFIRLAND.—WHAT THEY HAVE DONE.—HOW THE KAFIR QUESTION MUST BE SETTLED.—EXTERMINATION OF THE BLACK RACE.—THE PRESENT KAFIR WAR.—HOW IT WILL END.—MEASURES THAT OUGHT TO BE ADOPTED.—THEIR STRICT JUSTICE.—VINDICATION OF THE COLONISTS.—THE COMMANDO SYSTEM.—TREATIES, ETC.

THE Kafirs can scarcely be said to have any religion at all. The North American Indian has his Great Spirit; the Negro his Fetish: the Hottentot his Grasshopper;* but the Kafir has literally no idea of a Supreme Being or a future state.

And yet it appears impossible for the human mind to be entirely destitute of any notions of supernatural or spiritual influences. And so the Kafir is credulous in regard to a dozen of the

* There is a kind of grasshopper, or locust, at the Cape, called the "Hottentot's god," as these people are said to have formerly worshipped it.

absurdest superstitions. He has his "rain-makers," his "doctors," and his "prophets"—lying impostors, in whom he puts full faith. Does a long drought occur, which threatens to wither up his scanty crop of meelies and Kafir corn—his hope and trust are in the rain-maker. This solemn humbug, who is, perhaps, some keen observer of natural phenomena, and can guess through such observations the period about which rain may be expected, tells the listening booby who consults him, to perform certain ceremonies (any absurdity he chooses to invent), and *then* that he shall have rain at such a time. If his prophecy is correct — or rather, I am wrong to call it prophecy, for the rain-maker professes to cause the rain himself— he is regarded with awe and reverence. If the rain fails to appear when he commands it, he is clever enough to impute it to some error or misdeed on the part of the suppliant.

Does disease break out among the cattle? The "doctor" is called in; and though he may often enough effect a cure through very natural means, he is wise enough to impute it to witchcraft on his own part. Does an unfortunate Kafir lose some of his herd? The doctor again is consulted and tells who has stolen them; not that he is often, if ever, right; but his decision is final.

The man whom he pronounces guilty must reinstate the missing number, or, in some cases, be mulcted of all the cattle he possesses. When a Kafir, therefore, has a great desire for his neighbour's cattle, he has only to present a bribe to the doctor, who will give such a decision as will hand over his herds to the briber. This is a style of appropriation, under the semblance of justice, constantly adopted by the chiefs themselves against their subjects.

Prophets are more rare — which is strange, seeing that nothing is easier than prophesying. The language used by these mysterious gentry, in all ages, and all countries, is so exquisitely ambiguous, so plastically framed to meet almost any contingency, and so perfectly uncertain in all the details of chronology and locality, that I can scarcely imagine any prophecy to have been ever uttered that may not be said to have been fulfilled a dozen times. Yet Kafir prophets are by no means numerous. I perceive, however, that a very ambitious one has sprung up lately, who has made rather a bad shot for a start, having ventured to prophesy, that when the war should begin between the Kafirs and the English, the latter would be turned into all sorts of vegetable and animal productions, leaving the colony free

for the Kafirs to inhabit. This worthy man is evidently a novice in his art, and although he has endeavoured to back out of his mistake, by saying that the Kafirs spoiled his prophecy by firing the first shot, I fear this "dodge" will hardly avail him in the eyes of his compatriots. I have no doubt, however, that he has gained the end desired—namely, the commencement of a war.

I have been considerably amused by seeing it gravely asserted in the English papers, and even in one or two Cape ones, that the present war differs from all former ones, in being a "religious one"—as if this prophet was anything more than a tool in the hands of Sandilli, or that the latter placed one iota more of confidence* in his prophecies than the Archbishop of Canterbury would have done. He only wanted an excuse and a pretext for attacking the colony, and he adopted the very lame one of a prophecy.

The Kafirs perform one rite—that of circumcision—of which I have never been able to trace the origin among them. It would seem to stamp them as of Eastern or Arabian origin; but they do not appear to attach any particular

* This may seem at variance with my statement of the confidence placed by Kafirs in their magicians: but I was speaking then of the *ignobile vulgus*, and not of the chiefs, who are behind the scenes in these fellows' "arcana."

religious ideas to the ceremony. It is not performed till the boy attains the age of puberty—namely, about thirteen or fourteen. No intercourse is allowed between the sexes till this ceremony has taken place with regard to the male.

The principal portion of the ceremony of marriage, consists in purchasing the wife of her father for a certain number of cattle. The number is fixed by the father, and is in proportion to his own prosperity and rank in life. Of course it often happens among Kafirs, as among Europeans, that an ardent youth of small means but vast expectations (founded on the convenient proximity of the colony), will dare to fall in love with some maiden whose papa is a man of wealth and of high degree, and who turns up his nose at the poor suitor, as contemptuously as a City alderman would look on an amorous "sub" of a marching regiment, living on his pay, who should dare to lift his eyes to Miss Jemima Bulliondust, his fair daughter. Poor "subs" in such cases have only to choose between Gretna Green and despair. But they manage such things better in Kafirland. The ardent youth, thus repulsed, feels that something desperate must be done to win (or purchase) his mistress. Therefore, hav-

ing no very great respect for the inconvenient distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*, he collects some friends to aid him. Some fine day they walk over the colonial boundary, pick out the requisite number of cattle from the first herd they see; drive them to their own kraal—and then the ardent youth claims his bride.

The farmer, whose cattle are missing, takes the most unromantic view of the subject, and calls it theft, and rushes off to give notice of the robbery to the nearest "authorities." A sergeant and two or three privates of the Cape Corps are sent to follow the spoor of the stolen herd (if they can) into Kafirland; and then the chief, into whose territory they have been traced, is required by a certain day to restore the cattle or a similar number. The chief generally makes a dozen excuses, and gets off altogether; but if he is hard pressed, he calls in a "doctor." The doctor points out the culprits—most probably innocent men. The chief helps himself to the required number of the fattest and best of the supposed culprits' cattle, and sends to the colonial authorities the same number of the leanest and most miserable of his own herd. And so, if everything goes on in the most favourable manner—namely, if the authorities *do* interfere, if the spoor *can* be

traced, if the chief *will* restore—the farmer receives, about six months after his loss of fifty fine cattle, the same number as lean as the most miserable of Pharaoh's kine. Even then he considers himself a miracle of good fortune; because nine times out of ten he gets nothing.

"Eating-up" has a very awkward sound, when applied to their fellow-men by savages. The Kafir is very fond of the term, and the practice is very common among his people: but it simply means taking a man's cattle, his land, his corn, his property of every description, burning down his hut, and turning him out—not a much more enviable predicament for him than if they literally devoured him, and therefore the term is most expressive. "Eating-up" is practised by the chiefs against refractory or obnoxious subjects, and is occasionally adopted to punish certain crimes.

The punishment of death is frequently inflicted among this nation, and in various ways, most of them diabolically cruel: I will merely mention one as a specimen of the most ingenious and refined cruelty; and, as it appears to me, one of the most frightful tortures that can be inflicted. The culprit is rubbed all over with grease, he is then taken to an anthill, against which he is

placed and secured to the ground; the anthill is then broken, and the ants left to crawl over him and eat his flesh from his bones, which they do in time most effectually. I doubt whether the Inquisition ever invented a torture so horrible and lingering as this must be. Let me remind the reader that the ants are three times the size of those he is accustomed to see in England, and their bite most irritating and painful.

To talk about the administration of justice among such a nation of savages, is, of course, verging on the absurd. The Kafirs occasionally refer disputes to their chiefs, or to others in authority, and get some kind of settlement—generally, I fancy, in the style of justice with the oyster, swallowing the fish and giving the shells to the litigants.

I believe the Missionaries do *some* good among the Kafirs, not by making many sincere converts, for these, I fancy, could be numbered by tens; but by acquiring a certain influence for good over them. Yet it appears strange that they should have acquired no greater or more powerful influence. I fear that many of my observations on these gentlemen and their deeds may be construed into a violent prejudice on my part against them and their objects; I entirely

disavow any such prejudice against Missionaries, or Missionary Societies in the abstract; but truth compels me to record their failures and their errors. Let any one consider the amount of money that has been expended on these missions in Kaffraria alone, the number of Missionaries who have been sent there, and the time they have spent in the country, and then let him ask—what is the result? Have you civilized or converted five hundred Kafirs?—No. Have you acquired such an influence over their minds as to prevent war and bloodshed, rapine, theft, or falsehood, among even *one* hundred?—No. Have you enlisted one single chief under the banners of peace?—No. Are the Kafirs, or again, are any hundred of them, more peaceful, honest, industrious, or better informed than they were ages ago?—No. What then has been the result of your labours?

I will grant that you can produce some thirty or forty (doubtful) converts, who have professed to embrace your faith on very advantageous terms to themselves; such men may be rather more decent in demeanour and more civilized in ideas than their fellows, especially while under your *surveillance*. I will grant that you have induced them to look on you personally with a

favourable eye; that they regard you as quiet, inoffensive men, who do them no harm, and are not worth the pillaging. I grant that your messengers are allowed to pass uninjured in war time, thus showing that you exercise *some* influence for good (as I said at starting), though it is an influence that seems more beneficial to yourselves than to the Kafirs, or the Cape colonists; and thus, with your ten converts a-piece, gentlemen (I believe I am liberal in my allowance), I leave you, heartily regretting that your time, your talents, your industry, and the money of your societies, had not been all applied to some in our own land who deeply need them all, and in whose hearts is the right soil to receive the seed which it is yours to sow, instead of being wasted on the flinty breasts of these "irreclaimable savages."

The Spaniards of old exterminated, on the plea of heterodoxy, the natives of South America, who had never heard of orthodoxy! it was, certainly, rather an extreme measure—a peculiar method, at all events, of making converts. Our modern Missionaries, with a laudable zeal, preach the gospel to men who are ignorant of the existence of a supreme Being; or endeavour to teach theology and Christianity before they have taught

decency and cleanliness. Is their system, with all its humanity, likely to be much more successful than the inhuman one of the Spaniards? Can we conceive the idea of a man becoming a convert to Christianity before he has learned to cover his nakedness?

The settlement of the Kafir question will be only effected by one of two means—they must be civilized or exterminated. Sir Harry Smith has promised to pursue the latter of these two courses —no easy matter, perchance, but far less difficult than the former; as to the humanity of the matter, it is revolting to every Christian-like feeling to say, "We will exterminate them;" and Sir Harry could only have used the expression in a fit of passion, to which he is so constitutionally subject: but that such will be the event I do not doubt;—not that I imagine England, or the colonists, will ever carry on a "war of extermination" against the Kafir people; but their destiny to diminish and gradually to disappear from South eastern Africa, is not the less palpable to me. It has been so with the Hottentot in Africa, with the Indian in North and South America. Were these ever civilized? or have they not been slowly and silently exterminated before the progress of the white man? The same

process of gradual decay has already commenced in New Zealand, and fifty years hence a Maori shall be as rare in either island as fifty years ago was an European. The Kafirs have escaped as yet, simply because civilization has not yet set her foot into their land; because they have been hitherto an independent people, unmixed with the "Caucasian" race — their nationality once gone, and they must follow to the doom of all savage tribes. That their nationality *must* soon depart, no one can doubt. England cannot submit to havea race of robbers for ever on the frontier of one of her most important colonies, ready to rob and murder her sons. It is right that she should *not* yield; for to abandon the Cape frontier under such circumstances, would be to abandon the cause of progress itself. The fate of the Black man is written in the history of the past: slowly but surely he passes away from the face of the earth—year by year his numbers diminish—his race is exterminated. The Kafir's time is well-nigh come.

Meantime, however, these same "irreclaimable savages" (as Sir Benjamin D'Urban most correctly designated them, to the great disgust of Exeter Hall) will cause us much trouble. We are just now engaged in a new war with them, and in

spite of all the speeches at home and the despatches from the colony, the protest of the House of Commons against the expense, and the threats of wonderful deeds on the part of his Excellency the governor of the Cape—I fully expect to see this same war end as all the others have done. The Kafirs, finding themselves hemmed in and beaten on all sides, will cry "Peace," and offer to submit. The governor will call on them for an *unconditional* submission, and they will unconditionally submit accordingly. One or two chiefs will then be dismissed from their commands (but even Sandilli will not be hanged); all of them will be bullied in very fierce language. They will be required to take all sorts of oaths as to their future behaviour, and they will swear anything with all imaginable promptitude and pleasure. They will be told that "next time, &c." reminding us of the anecdote of the man who enumerates a series of insults and assaults against himself, and then warns the perpetrator that if he does *much* more he will "rouse the sleeping lion that is within him, and he won't answer for the consequences."

In effect, the Kafirs will leave off fighting when they are morally convinced that it is a losing game, and they will find themselves rather better

supplied with cattle and necessaries than when the war commenced. They will depart virtually "taking a sight" of derision at those who put faith in their sacred oaths, and fully determining to bide their time and renew the attack on the first favourable opportunity. England, meanwhile, will have lost some of her bravest men, and two millions of hard cash out of that wonderful phenomenon — a Whig chancellor's surplus.

When I thus laugh, however, at measures which I fear *will* be adopted, the reader will justly consider that I ought to state those which I think *should* be adopted; if he is a member of the "Aborigines Protection Society," I fear he will be shocked at my proposition; though I conscientiously believe that they would be the most humane in their results, by preventing worse evils in the future.

First, I would hang Sandilli, and two or three more of the principal chiefs, as murderers and traitors (they had sworn allegiance to the Queen). Next, I would take possession of every inch of Kafirland, not by merely declaring it British territory, but by apportioning the land among British subjects, and making the Kafirs work for their living—they have lived too long by rob-

bery, and in idleness. Thirdly, I would keep all prisoners taken in arms against her Majesty, and work them in gangs on the roads and other public works for the same period as they would be transported for such an offence, if in England. Lastly, I would adopt means to give every man work and fair wages for such work, and most decidedly prevent any cruelty or oppression being exercised against them by the colonists.

I believe that some such measures as these are positively necessary to prevent a biennial Kafir war with its attendant bloodshed and expense. Such measures are *not* harsh, though they are severe. Weighed in the scales of justice and of humanity also, they will not be found wanting. We made the Chinese pay for the "fun" of going to war with us (though it is very doubtful whether *they* had not justice on their side); and why should we let the Kafir have the same amusement gratis? He has no silver like the Chinese—then he must pay in what he *has* got—in lands, and cattle, and bodily labour. Were he to give us all that he possesses of the two former, and his lifetime of the two latter, he could scarcely restore a tithe of the value of the blood and treasure we have been compelled to expend

through his rapacity, dishonesty, and want of faith.

Some portion of the English press has lately endeavoured to impress upon their readers that Kafir wars are private and colonial, and not imperial, affairs: I am not going to enter into any long argument on this point, especially as I think I can show the fallacy of the assertion in a few lines. If the war is to be regarded as private—if the mother country has nothing to do with the differences between the colonists and the Kafirs, than she has no right to prevent the colonists from carrying on such war in any manner they may think proper, or from adopting such means of punishing and preventing aggression on the part of the savages as they may consider necessary. But she *has* done this—she abolished the commando system, by which the Dutch boers joined together and recovered their stolen herds, and inflicted punishment on the thieves—she forbade the colonists ever, and under any circumstances, to attack the Kafirs—she settled the treaties and relations to be signed and established between the colony and the Kafir chiefs in direct opposition to the wishes of the

colonists, and fully warned by them of the disasters which would ensue from such a policy.

Having committed all these absurdities, has she any reason to exclaim against their consequences, or to expect the colonists to pay for the results of the very folly against which they exclaimed so loudly ?

CHAPTER XII.

JOURNEY TO COLESBERG.—AN EXCELLENT RESTING-PLACE.—A HIGH WIND.—"RAINING LOCUSTS."—HORRIBLE DESTRUCTION BY THESE INSECTS.—BURYING THEIR BODIES.—A CHIEF JUSTICE ON CIRCUIT —"D—D DUTCHMEN."—HUNGER AND THIRST.—A FRUGAL REPAST.—CRADOCK.—AN "EQUALITY" LANDLORD.—ALARMING A HOUSEHOLD.—COLESBERG.—A TOWN OF TEETOTALERS.—EAU-DE-COLOGNE.—A RIVER FULL OF WATER!—LARGE GAME ON THE PLAINS.—HUNTING ADVICE.—OSTRICHES.—A TUMBLE.

COLESBERG is the *Ultima Thule* of Cape towns and villages; it is named after Sir Lowry Cole, formerly a governor of the colony, and *mirabile dictu*, a good one; it is situate within a few miles of the Orange River, which forms the boundary of the Cape Colony, and is generally the spot where the mighty hunters, who are bound for the desert, bid adieu to civilization.

But as Colesberg is a desperate long way from the point where I took leave of the reader in the last chapter but one, and as it took me many a weary hour to reach it, I cannot consent now to take an imaginary leap right into it without looking at the country as we go.

First, we make for the Mancazana, and we ride up to as pretty a homestead as the whole colony can show; it is the dwelling of Mr. Walter Currie, who has lately figured in the accounts received from the Colony, as heading a party of burghers, and gallantly leading them against a whole tribe of Kâfirs, ten to one in number, and yet beating back the savages, till old General Somerset and his "regulars" came up, and made a complete rout of it. It is not the first time that Walter Currie has done such deeds; his farm is very much exposed to Kafir depredations—he has suffered more severely than most men by the wretched frontier policy and mock treaties; and I can well conceive the *gusto* with which he would attack the dark gentlemen when at liberty to do so. Unfortunately he was ill-supported by some of his followers, not farmers, but Graham's Town shop-boys, from whom one could scarcely expect better things; but I can well conceive the indignation and disgust of such a man, whose courage is as true as steel, at seeing the cowardice of even one or two of his own troop.

If ever a man had a lurking suspicion that his presence might be unwelcome at the farm he was then approaching to claim its hospitalities, assu-

redly such suspicion would vanish at first sight of his warm reception here ; moreover, he may ride from Colesberg to Cape Town, and never meet with such comfortable quarters, not to mention the amiability of the hostess, and the hearty frankness of the kind host. No mud floors, rooms without ceilings, thatched roof with spacious holes to admit the rain; no unglazed holes for windows, hides for beds (and a fat Dutchman for a bed-fellow!), but all comfort and convenience—a very villa, worthy of a George Robins' advertisement. I greatly fear that Mr. Currie's hospitality must be much imposed upon in consequence of the delights his abode affords to the weary traveller ; but I will answer for it that every man meets with the heartiest of welcomes. For myself, I will frankly confess, that I lingered out the day, and passed the night beneath his roof, when I ought, as a hearty traveller, to have pushed on another twenty miles.

Next day was warm enough, but the wind was desperately high, and, much to my disgust, right in my face as I rode away on my journey. After travelling some ten miles, having swallowed several ounces of sand meanwhile, and been compelled occasionally to remove the sand-hills that were collecting in my eyes,

I began to fall in with some locusts. At first they came on gradually and in small quantities, speckling the earth here and there, and voraciously devouring the herbage. They were not altogether pleasant, as they are weak on the wing, and quite at the mercy of the wind, which uncivilly dashed many a one into my face with a force that made my cheeks tingle. By degrees they grew thicker and more frequent. My progress was now most unpleasant, for they flew into my face every instant. Flung against me and my horse by the breeze, they clung to us with the tightness of desperation, till we were literally speckled with locusts. Each moment the clouds of them became denser, till at length—I am guilty of no exaggeration in saying—they were as thick in the air as the flakes of snow during a heavy fall of it; they covered the grass and the road, so that at every step my horse crushed dozens; they were whirled into my eyes and those of my poor nag, till at last the latter refused to face them, and turned tail in spite of whip and spur. They crawled about my face and neck, got down my shirt-collar and up my sleeves—in a word, they drove me to despair as completely as they drove my horse to stubbornness, and I was obliged to ride back a mile or two and

claim shelter from them at a house I had passed on my route; fully convinced that a shower of locusts is more unbearable than hail, rain, snow, and sleet combined.

I found the poor farmer in despair at the dreadful visitation which had come upon him—and well he might be so. To-day he had standing crops, a garden, and wide pasture lands in full verdure; the next day the earth was as bare all round as a macadamized road.

I afterwards saw millions of these insects driven by the wind into the sea at Algoa Bay, and washed on shore again in such heaps, that the prisoners and the coolies in the town were busily employed for a day or two in burying the bodies, to prevent the evil consequence that would arise from the putrefying of them close to the town.

No description of these little plagues, or of the destruction they cause, can well be an exaggeration. Fortunately, their visitations are not frequent, as I only remember three during my five years' residence in South Africa. Huge fires are sometimes lighted round corn-lands and gardens, to prevent their approach: and this is an effectual preventive when they can steer their own course; but when carried away by such a wind

as I have described, they can only go where it drives them, and all the bonfires in the world would be useless to stay their progress. The farmer thus eaten out of house and home (most literally) has nothing to do but to move his stock forthwith to some other spot which has escaped them—happy if he can find a route free from their devastations, so that his herds and flocks may not perish by the way.

Next day I "did" another five-and-forty miles, and came into green plains again. In the evening I put up with a farmer, who was a friend of mine. Just as the shades of evening were closing round us, we were startled by the sound of a light wagon, drawn by six horses, coming along the road. It stopped at the door, and from the tented cover emerged the head of Sir John Wilde (brother of the present Lord Chancellor), who was travelling on circuit—he is the Chief Justice of the colony.

My friend approached the wagon.

"One word," cried the Chief Justice, in a tone of great anxiety and half despair; "*can* you speak English?"

"I am ashamed to say I can speak little else," replied my friend.

"Thank God!" exclaimed his Lordship, "I am

so sick of those d—d Dutchmen. Will you give me a bed?"

"With the greatest pleasure."

Five minutes afterwards we were all under the sheep-farmer's roof — his Lordship and myself eating as travellers only can eat.

Our sleeping accommodations were by no means extensive; but the Chief Justice was accommodated with *the* bedroom, while I and my friend slept soundly, the one on a sofa and the other on the floor, with that capital travelling pillow, a saddle under his head.

Another day's journey brought me into Cradock. It was a very tedious day's ride, however, for I had quitted the grass country altogether, and got into the "Karoo," which is a species of little succulent brush growing in tufts all over the land, like the little woolly knots on a black man's head. Cattle, sheep, and horses thrive admirably on it, and require little water when they eat it—which is decidedly convenient, seeing that there is very little of that luxury to be obtained in the "Karoo" districts. My horses, however, had never seen this vegetable production before, and positively refused to touch it, the taste for it being an acquired one. They were desperately hungry, and suffering still more

from thirst, but I was unable to supply either of their wants. I was little better off myself, being faint and hungry.

At length I sighted a cottage, and despatched my after-rider to see whether any entertainment for man or beast could be obtained there. It was inhabited by a black man, who had neither forage nor water for my horses, nor anything for myself but half a loaf of bread, the colour of his own complexion. For this I gave him a shilling, divided the luxury with my servant, and managed to eat the greater portion of my own share, washing it down with raw Cognac from my "pocket pistol." I then gathered some karoo, and twisted it round the bits of my horses, so as to keep some moisture in their mouths, and I pushed on at the best speed the poor brutes could muster.

At Cradock I put up at a decent inn, where the landlord was a forward, half-impudent kind of fellow, who sat down to dinner with his guests, and behaved in a manner which showed him to be a thorough "equality" man. Those who entertain a theoretic love of a republic should try life in a colony first, where the ordinary distinctions of title, rank, and profession being wanting, each man considers himself as "good as his neighbour" (or rather considerably better, it would seem), and becomes

extremely offensive in his evident desire to thrust forward his "rights," be you ever so innocent of the slightest intention of disputing them. Mine host was a rampant specimen of this unpleasant kind of animal, and bored me excessively by his eternal "big" talk. I was quite enough of a judge of human nature, to guess that the fellow was an arrant coward, and the night after my arrival I had a most amusing evidence of the truth of my supposition.

I received an invitation to dine with the civil commissioner, and chief magistrate of the district, and, like a sensible man, I accepted it. One or two friends dropped in during the evening; a little music was started, and then the tables were thrust aside, and we danced with the usual Cape vigour in such matters, till the first small hour of the morning.

On returning to my inn, I saw not the slightest symptoms of anybody being "up," so I thumped at the door with tolerable force. After continuing this exercise for a considerable time with no beneficial result, I began to feel exceedingly wroth at being thus barred out. I then walked round the house to see if I could make a guess at the host's bedroom. In despair I tried a window, on the ground floor—it was unbolted, and I opened

it. There were no shutters, for burglaries were unknown at the Cape. I lifted my right leg quietly, and thrust it in at the window ; a great crash of bottles followed this feat, for the window-sill was full of them. Immediately afterwards I heard sounds of footsteps in the house. I stood still and waited for the issue, expecting a little comedy. A light approached, voices were whispering in hurried and alarmed tones, and at last I saw my worthy host *en chemise*, his wife *en* ditto, and one or two house-servants in similar light costume. The host held a candle at arm's length before him, and approached very slowly, with pallid face and shaking limbs ; his wife clung to his skirts (scanty support!), and the servants clung to one another. As soon as they were just inside the door of the room, I shouted, "Holloa there!"

Immediately the whole party turned tail, and bolted with a shriek, the landlord dropping the candlestick, and stumbling over it and his solitary garment waving in the breeze. I burst into a fit of laughter, which I suppose sounded very human and very unburglar-like ; for the party returned again and *reconnoitred*. Courage was restored, and I went to bed. The landlord entirely changed his tone to me next day, and had

suddenly taken a lesson in civility, while he positively refused to let me pay for the two bottles of brandy I had smashed.

Cradock is undeserving of description, being merely a thriving village, containing about an equal population of Dutch and English.

Three days' more ride over hill and dale, and plains of vast extent, brought me to Colesberg. This little town is insignificant enough in size and number of inhabitants, but is a convenient trading station, as being the last town on the northern boundary of the colony. I was rather amused to find the whole place devoted to tee-totalism—there is positively not a wine or spirit licence granted in the town. The land on which it is built was granted by Government, in 1830, to the Churchwardens of a newly-erected church, and by them it is parcelled or leased out in building allotments. But they positively refused to allow any one to keep a "canteen" in the place. The reader must not suppose that such prohibition really has the effect of preventing the importation of spirits into the town, or the sale of them to those who wish to purchase them. The inhabitants of Colesberg are remarkably fond of eau-de-Cologne; but instead of pouring it on their pocket-handkerchiefs, they mix it with

water and drink it. I bought some and did likewise; and I can conscientiously recommend *such* eau-de-Cologne as a very agreeable liquor. I ought to remark, however, that mine smelt and tasted so extremely like eau-de-*vie*, that there was, probably, some mistake.

A man must either be a sportsman, a naturalist, or a geologist, who ventures to Colesberg; and in either of those characters will find ample to gratify him. The plains are covered with lordly game, the mountains around with the choicest specimens of "rock." My first object was neither to shoot game nor to climb mountains; but to see a river! Positively I had ridden one hundred and fifty miles to see a river—the Orange River. The reader will doubtless think me a fool for my pains, especially as he will recollect that I have recorded the name of many a river crossed by me on my journey. True; but then each river was a "dry stream," as an Irish friend once expressed it. Have I forgotten to tell him that the old proverb pronounces the Cape a land of "flowers without scent, birds without song, rivers without water?" And the proverb, unlike proverbs in general, is very literally true.

Great and intense, therefore, was my delight

when I rode to the banks of the Orange River, looked on its broad waters and its clustering islets, the shady willows, and eternal mimosas clothing its banks, the agate rocks projecting above its surface, and the mountain tops reflected in its bosom. A man who has seen landscapes without water, for six months in a year, can appreciate my emotions, and no one else; but as I can scarcely expect to find such a man among my readers, I had better cease prating on the subject.

What a sight is a South African plain, with troops of galloping gnus, stately ostriches, bounding springboks, prancing quaggas, beautiful zebras, and lordly buffaloes! and all this you may see on the plains round Colesberg; not altogether though, dear reader, as if the Zoological Society had let loose all their stock in a body for our special entertainment, but you can scarcely ride in any direction without seeing some of the above mentioned animals, and getting a shot at them if you are so inclined.

Every one has heard of the Cape springbok, the most graceful, swift, and beautiful of antelopes. I saw hundreds of them on the plains here, and hunted them with great perseverance; but their extreme shyness and their tremendous

pace render it very difficult to come within range of them.

"The best plan, my dear fellow," said a friend to me, "is to run them to a hill—they bolt up it like a shot—you creep round it, and through the first kloof (or valley), when you will catch them on the other side, halting and looking about, wondering what the deuce has become of you: then is your time to drop into one of them."

The advice was admirable, wanting only one thing, like advice in general, to make it perfect, namely, practicability. There was not a hill to run them to within twenty miles, and in such a "burst," which was likely to get the best of it, the springboks or my Cape pony? I shot one solitary individual who was rash enough to stray a little too near me.

As for the ostriches, they generally take care to keep out of the way; though the story of their outstripping the swiftest horse is a decided "myth." I chased one, gaining on him fast, till my horse, putting his foot in a wolf-hole, came down with great force, and pitched me a summerset a few yards over his head, with my double-barrel in my hand: the fall gave me such a shake that I declined pursuing my long-legged friend any further.

CHAPTER XIII.

CURIOUSLY-SHAPED MOUNTAINS.—DANGERS OF BUFFALO-SHOOTING.—A SPORTING BOER.—OUR EQUIPMENT.—TRACKING A BUFFALO.—GETTING THE FIRST SHOT.—THE CATASTROPHE!—A LION-LOVING MAJOR.—"DODGING" THE KING AND QUEEN OF THE FOREST.—THE SNOW MOUNTAINS.—CHANGE OF CLIMATE.—GRAAF REINET DISTRICT.—BARREN PLAINS.—A THUNDER-STORM.—TOWN OF GRAAF REINET.—VARIOUS KINDS OF FARMING.—BUYING CATTLE.—WATCHFUL HERDSMEN.—A NAP ON HORSEBACK.

HAVING regaled my eyes with the sight of a fine flowing river, I turned my steps in another direction, and took a westerly route across the Sea-cow (Hippopotamus) river. Beyond this stream are mountains, perhaps the most curious, in point of form, in the world. Occasionally half a dozen cone-shaped tops meet the eye, looking like so many nine-pins for giants to play with. Then will be seen a pyramid, or perhaps two or three of them, almost as perfect in shape as Cheops' in Egypt—again the mind associates with them the idea of some giants' tombs. Suddenly a perfectly flat-topped mountain is met with, and we think of a giant's dining-table:

then comes a cylinder, which might have served for his mustard-pot. Altogether, the wonderful variety of shapes heaped together, forms one of the most fantastic landscapes I ever beheld; a geologist might spend weeks there enraptured and instructed; and a poet might well imagine he had entered into some enchanted region. Indeed, I was almost vexed at seeing no gnome or fairy, no supernatural dwarf, or peaceful giant (not one of the Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum sort), to give character and animation to the scene.

There is one species of sport in South Africa, both arduous and exciting, and, in my opinion, the most dangerous of all,—buffalo-shooting. Lion-hunting is generally followed by large parties; the lion is hemmed in, and, though woe betide the mortal whom he "charges," there are generally a dozen barrels ready to be discharged at him; besides which, he is vulnerable everywhere. Men, on the contrary, often take a solitary ramble in search of the buffalo—they have to creep through dense bush to find him; and when they come upon him, in some small open space, they are face to face with a ferocious brute, who (unlike the king of the forest) *never* declines a contest; and who, as he charges his enemy, presents to him a head covered with an

impenetrable helmet of massive horn. I firmly believe that it is safer work to track a lion alone than a buffalo; and yet, such is the *prestige* of a name, that no one (except one gallant Major, of whom hereafter) ever thinks of intruding unaccompanied on his majesty's rest, while dozens of the Boers take a stroll alone with the hopes of meeting a buffalo.

Mynheer Hendrik Rens was a sturdy farmer in the Colesberg district, extremely fond of sport, especially of any sport that endangered his neck. He cared little for shooting a partridge, or hunting a wild buck; but tracking a lion, or intruding on the domestic retreat of a buffalo, this was a genuine source of delight to him. I was enjoying Master Hendrik's hospitality, and how could I refuse to join him in his favourite sport? He suspected the "whereabouts" of a buffalo, and the idea of leaving the animal in quiet possession of his feeding-ground was too distressing to his mind for him to be able to endure it. Accordingly I agreed to be his companion in searching out the monster, and endeavouring to bag him. Our equipment was rather remarkable as we started, and so I will endeavour to give the reader a faint sketch of it.

We were mounted on a couple of little tough-

looking ponies, and being both tall men (and the worthy Dutchman about six feet two inches), our legs were no very great distance from the ground. These same limbs were, in the case of the Boer, enveloped in yellow tanned "leather crackers." Unhappily, my own were not! The only other garment sported by my friend, was a coarse blue shirt. His head was tied up in a handkerchief instead of being covered with a hat; because the worthy man had discovered that he was very apt to drop the latter article of costume, and on more than one occasion, while beating a retreat from some victorious buffalo, he had been compelled to leave it behind him on the field of battle. We each carried an immense, heavy, long-barrelled Boer's gun. My shoulder aches at the very thoughts of the thing to this day. Behind us rode a "Tottie," mounted on a still more diminutive pony than either the Boer or myself rode, but far more elegantly apparelled, as he not only wore a wide-awake hat, and a moleskin-jacket, but he had further ornamented the said hat with divers ostrich feathers, which were trailed round it in the orthodox style of South Africa. Then came the never-absent troop of sixty curs, as hungry and ill-looking a set of mongrels as eye ever rested on. Had they but "pluck," Heaven

defend the buffalo that should fall in their way! for they would eat him, horns and all, in half-an-hour!

"Piet, can you see any 'spoor?'" asked Mynheer, when we had ridden about half-an-hour.

Piet could not, or would not, for Piet was very fond of himself, and, I believe, looked upon the Boer and myself as a couple of noodles for risking our necks in search of a buffalo, when we could get plenty of good beef by slaughtering a tame ox at home. Piet had not the spirit of a sportsman.

We groped on through the stunted bush, which had the most vicious thorns* in the world. They penetrated my unlucky cords, but were innocuous against the leathers of the Boer, who chuckled in great delight at each new "squeak" of pain given by myself. The ponies did not relish them much, albeit they were very much accustomed to them.

"A spoor!" shouted the Boer, in delight. "Loo! loo!" and he encouraged the mongrels on.

Away they went, and in a few minutes their sixty throats gave warning that there was something in sight. What a howling it was! every note of the canine gamut struck at once, and pro-

* The Dutch give the most expressive name of *wach-een-beetje*, or "wait-a-little," to these thorns, which offer so determined a resistance to one's progress through the bush.

ducing the most hideous discord, instead of the inspiriting music of a pack of fox-hounds.

Nevertheless, I began to look forward to a "scrimmage" with great glee. I pressed forward, got a-head of the Boer, thrust my way through the bush in spite of the thorns, and determined, if possible, to get the first shot. At length I caught sight of a dusky-brown hide, and the sound of a loud "lowing" caught my ear, amid the din of the curs' howlings. A step or two further brought me to the verge of the green sward, and in sight of the brute. His stern was towards me. It was too bad to fire at him thus,—to take him in the rear.—Fair play and honour forbade it! The dogs were hard at him, however, and he ran from me without turning his head. Another moment, and I heard the Boer crashing through the bush, and fast approaching. The thought that he might rob me of the prey was too much for me, I levelled my huge gun and fired right into the animal's posteriors. Down he went like a shot. I dashed forward at a gallop, and on reaching him, saw—a fine fat ox, instead of a wild buffalo!

I was speechless with disgust; but not so Mynheer, who shouted with laughter, while Piet, looking very grave and practical, declared that he was a handsome beast, quite fit for slaughter

and worth sixty dollars. Exactly so—and precisely that sum did I pay for my day's *buffalo*-shooting—not to mention a pair of cords in ribbons and a pair of legs half flayed.

We saw not the ghost of a buffalo!

I alluded to a certain Major, who has retired from the toils of warfare to the peaceful position of a Cape farmer, and who has an unconquerable love of lions—or, at least, of taking solitary walks in search of them. More than once he has settled the monarch of the forest in single combat.

The Major shoulders his gun and walks out to "look for a lion," as unconcernedly as a Regent-street "gent" lounges about to look at pretty girls. In one of these rambles, the Major overtook a very fine lion. As they were both going the same road, they jogged on for some distance in silence—the Major a little way behind his majesty. At length the lion, hearing the Major's footsteps behind him, turned round and faced him. The Major stopped—so did the lion. The latter sat on his haunches, like a great tom-cat; and the Major, seizing the fortunate moment, levelled his piece, taking aim between the eyes. Ere he could draw the trigger, however, a slight sound on his right caused him to turn round, and on doing so he perceived the lion's dutiful wife

trotting along the road to join her husband. This was awkward: the Major drew back to the shelter of a bush and calculated the odds—two to one in favour of the quadrupeds. He decided that it would be very little satisfaction to kill the lion and be eaten by the lioness, or *vice versâ*—so he gave up the idea of firing for the present. Most prudent men would have decamped also; but not so the Major. He had perfectly determined on bagging that interesting couple sooner or later; and, therefore, he watched them, and positively "dodged" their steps till they turned into their abode.

Next day came the Major to that spot with men and dogs and guns; and next week I slept in the Major's house on the skin of that same king of the forest, while his consort's hide served me for a coverlet.

I cannot confess to any great depression of spirits on quitting the district to which my distinguished namesake, Sir Lowry Cole, a former Governor of the Colony, had supplied a name. It is altogether a dreary and barren region, the scarcity of water being generally too great to allow of cultivation to any extent. It has its beauties in the way of scenery here and there; but the pleasure of seeing them is attained with

so much toil, that whether it is worth going through so much to gain so little (as the young gentleman observed when he had mastered the alphabet) is a question I am disposed to answer with a very decided negative.

The Snewbergen, or Snow Mountain, is certainly not an inviting name, yet I determined to make my way through their range in quest of a certain little oasis in the desert, the town of Graaf Reinet. In a climate like that of the Cape colony, when one may live a lifetime without a glimpse of snow or frost, the idea of snow-clapped mountains is positively refreshing. But the unhappy man who shall be tempted to visit them in winter has my sincerest sympathy and pity. It is like emerging from a hot-house and plunging into an ice-house; the change is dreadful! As I passed through this wintry range of mountains, I had no thermometer to ascertain the exact temperature; but I doubt not that it was, after all, only a very moderate winter one. To judge by my own sensations, it might have been any number of degrees below zero. I was astonished that my nose remained a fixture on my face, and that no icicles collected in my eyes. I rode at double the ordinary travelling pace, and my after-rider was constantly letting the led horse

escape from him, through inability to feel the leading-rein with his benumbed hands.

What a glorious thing it was, in such regions, to ride up to a comfortable homestead, and seat yourself almost *in* the fire of blazing wood, imbibing "something warm," and laying in that internal lining of solid food which avails far more than fire to expel, or *re*pel, the wintry chill.

Emerging after a few days from these freezing quarters, I found myself in the plains of the Graaf Reinet district. It was pleasant to feel warm again, but what I gained in caloric I decidedly lost in the picturesque. Never-ending plains of burnt grass, tree-less, river-less, house-less—such were the attractions that greeted my eyes. How anything in the vegetable or animal kingdom could exist there seemed a perfect mystery. Yet the mystery is soon explained. I was there when there had been a long-continued drought—one of those visitations to which these districts are especially subject. One day the clouds began to gather—the wind fell—the air became oppressively sultry—and all gave notice of an approaching storm. My horses became restive and uneasy, and for myself I felt faint and weary to excess. My after-rider looked alarmed, for truly the heavens bore a fearful aspect. I can

conceive nothing more dismal than the deep, thick, black, impenetrable masses of clouds that surrounded us. It might have been the entrance to the infernal regions themselves that stood before us.

Suddenly we saw a stream of light, so vivid, so intensely bright, and of such immense height (apparently) that for a moment we were half blinded, while our horses snorted and turned sharp round away from the glare. Almost at the same instant burst forth a peal of thunder, like the artillery of all the universe discharged at once in our ears. There was no time to be lost: we struck spurs to our horses' flanks, and galloped to a mountain side, a little way behind us, where the quick eye of my Hottentot had observed a cave. In a few minutes—moments rather—we were within it, but not before the storm had burst forth in all its fury. One moment the country round us was black as ink—the next, it was a sheet of living flame, whiter than the white-heat of the furnace. One long-continued, never-ceasing roar of thunder (not separate claps as we hear them in England) deafened our ears, and each moment we feared destruction: for, more than once, huge masses of rock, detached by the lightning-blast from the

mountain above us, rolled down past our cavern with the roar of an avalanche. The Hottentot lay on his face, shutting out the sight, though he could not escape the sound.

At length the rain-spouts burst forth, and to describe how the water deluged the earth would be impossible; suffice it, that though we had entered the cave from the road without passing any stream, or apparently any bed of one, when we again ventured forth from our place of shelter, three hours later, a broad and impassable torrent flowed between ourselves and the road, and we had to crawl along the mountain sides on foot, with great difficulty, and in the momentary danger of losing our footing on its slippery surface, and being dashed into the roaring torrent, for about two miles ere we could find a fordable spot.

Two days later those plains were covered with a lovely verdure!

The town of Graaf Reinet is very different from most in the Eastern Province, in being perfectly Dutch in character. It is built with streets at right angles, streams of water, and rows of lemon trees, in all the formality, cleanliness, neatness, and sameness of any town in Holland. Coming originally from the land of

canals and dykes, a Dutchman always fancies such things essential portions of streets, and would as soon think of building a row of houses without a ditch and some stunted trees before them, as of erecting his dwelling without a chimney.

Nevertheless, the appearance of this little town is exceedingly pleasing, especially from the contrast it bears to the surrounding desolation. It is absurd, in noticing such insignificant places, to give catalogues of the public buildings. The only thing noticeable in Graaf Reinet is, that it has a church with a spire to it, a remarkable rarity in the colony; and also, that there is a chapel built expressly for the coloured people by the Dutch Boers. A certain writer in the Cape has laid great stress on this circumstance, and adduces it as an instance of the kind feeling and consideration of the Dutch for their former slaves. With all due respect, and without the slightest wish to dispute the existence of those amiable virtues in the bosoms of the worthy Dutchman, may they not—answer ye who have inhabited tropical lands amid a Negro population,—may they not, in this instance, have been actuated by a feeling of respect for their own olfactory nerves? I visited a "black" chapel in Brazil, and I should

be ashamed to confess how much I spent in eau-de-Cologne during the ensuing week.

Graaf Reinet was the head-quarters of the Boers, who, disgusted with British rule, emigrated to Natal. Since their departure great numbers of both Dutch and English have flocked to the town from the Western districts. Wine-growing has been started, though it was previously unknown in the Eastern Province; it has been eminently successful, and I think the best Cape wine I ever tasted was that grown by a Mr. Thornhill, in the Graaf Reinet district.

Sheep also thrive well, and immense numbers are bred here for slaughter, as well as for wool. Cattle are equally in favour.

I attended a great sale of stock at Graaf Reinet, in company with a friend, at whose farm, some three hours' ride distant, I was staying. My friend bought about seventy head of cattle, and then experienced the usual difficulty of getting a herdsman to drive them home. At length we settled the matter, by resolving to drive them home ourselves. It is true that we were going to a ball in Graaf Reinet; but we arranged to lock them up in the pound till we started. Two others were to join us, so that our party was to consist of four.

Our ball being over at about three in the morning, we saddled our horses, turned out the cattle, put them before us, and started for the farm. We were all yawning dreadfully, being unaccustomed to such dissipated hours. The conversation flagged, and by degrees ceased altogether. Each man seemed to be looking very intently at his bridle. The horses walked quietly and slowly, the reins hung loose on their necks. We were all fast asleep! How long we continued so I cannot tell; but one of the party at length awoke with a start, as his nag stumbled over a stone.

"Halloa there, B.!"

B. opened his eyes.

"Where are the cattle?"

"Halloa! where the deuce can they be?"

Not the faintest outline of an ox met our eyes, as we galloped away in four separate directions, to search for the missing herd. After a long, fruitless search, we gave it up. My friend never recovered above five-and-twenty of his seventy oxen; and has never since ventured to take a nap *à cheval.*

CHAPTER XIV.

POPULAR EDUCATION.—HISTORY OF THE CAPE SYSTEM.—ITS ANNUAL COST.—ITS PECULIAR ADVANTAGES IN A MIXED POPULATION.—JOHN BULL AND THE BOERS.—A REGULAR CAPE ROAD.—CAUSES OF BAD ROADS.—A MOUNTAIN RIDE.—A GRAND AND VARIED PANORAMA.—THE VILLAGE OF SOMERSET.—CULTIVATION OF TOBACCO.—THE POET PRINGLE.—HIS HOME.—THE SCENE OF A ROMANCE.—AN UNINVITED GUEST.—SNAKES IN SOUTH AFRICA.—ANTIDOTE FOR THEIR BITES.

Some of the colonies of England are "going a-head" of the mother country in a matter of great importance—popular education. The system pursued at the Cape for several years, reflects the greatest credit on the colony; and has been eminently successful.

In every town and village of the least importance, is a good and substantial school-house, open free to all classes and all sects, where instruction is given in all the essentials of a simple and sound education, by gentlemen who have been selected as teachers with great judgment. They are principally graduates of the Scotch universities,—and are, without exception,

men of considerable ability and high character, and who seem to have the interest of their charge thoroughly at heart.

The idea of the establishment of these schools originated with Sir John Herschell, when the great astronomer was sojourning at Cape Town, to make his observations on the heavenly bodies in the southern hemisphere. He was ably seconded in his suggestions by Dr. Innes, then the principal of the South African College, and, by their joint exertions, the present system was elaborated. The local government most honourably voted the requisite funds to support the schools. Dr. Innes paid a visit to England, to select competent teachers,—and in a short period, a good, sound, and useful education was at the service of every child in the colony, whose parents chose to avail themselves of such an advantage, free from every kind of expense.

I must state that the broad principles of the Christian religion are taught in these schools, but with such praiseworthy and careful avoidance of all sectarian doctrines, that the children of Churchmen, Dissenters, and Roman Catholics,—and even one or two Mahometans,—attend them without the slightest complaint ever having been uttered by any one on religious grounds. This is

the more remarkable, inasmuch as sectarian differences run very high at the Cape.

The teachers have salaries varying from 100*l.* to 200*l.*, besides a house. The instruction consists of reading, writing, history, mathematics, natural philosophy, and geography. Out of the regular school-hours the teachers take private pupils at a moderate rate, who wish to learn Latin and Greek, or French. Thus I have no hesitation in declaring that the rising generation at the Cape will be far beyond that of England in all the essentials of a good education. Perfect ignorance will be almost unknown, and unheard of in the colony. And what does the reader suppose is the sum requisite to secure all these inestimable advantages to a rising state? I will tell him—2,500*l.* per annum! or less than one-fourth of the amount of the "pensions,"* paid out of the revenue of the same colony to a set of persons who, in nine cases out of ten, have no claim whatever on its funds or its gratitude. But where in the wide world is "jobbery" extinct? Veritably, *not* in the land of the Hottentots.

The advantages of these schools are nowhere more perceptible than in the district of Graaf

* The Cape Pension List is 10,500*l.* a-year; the whole revenue only 50,000*l.*

Reinet, where there is a mixed population of Dutch and English. The children of both races are being educated together, and in another generation all traces of difference will have been obliterated. This is a "consummation devoutly to be wished," seeing that the English and Dutch have not, hitherto, *fused* as kindly as might be desired. John Bull is as pompous a fellow in South Africa as in England, and his intense appreciation of his own excellences, induces him to look upon the Boers as an inferior order of animals to himself. With a due allowance for the want of certain conventional advantages on the part of the Dutchman, Master John is decidedly mistaken,—but it is useless to tell him so.

When I bade farewell to the town of Graaf Reinet, and started for the neighbouring district of Somerset, I was agreeably surprised to find myself on a tolerably good road. I have before remarked on the rarity of such a thing in the Cape Colony. An English reader can form but little idea of a really bad road. Let him picture to himself a broad straggling pathway, with loose stones scattered all over it, of the size ordinarily used for paving the streets of London, interspersed occasionally with stumps of trees, deep holes, hard rock, and sudden descents of a foot or

two at a step; and further, imagine the said road constantly ascending and descending mountains at an angle of 45 degrees,—now and then plunging precipitously into the bed of a river, which is sometimes a torrent, sometimes a swamp, where you are sure to stick fast, and sometimes has great rolling stones just below the surface of the water (as large as Sisyphus rolled unceasingly up-hill), over which your horse tumbles, and pitches you unceremoniously into a cold bath: let him further conceive such road clouded with whirlwinds of sand, which penetrate into the traveller's ears, eyes, nose, and mouth; or else so greasy with mud that neither man nor beast can progress steadily along it,—and then he will have formed a faint notion of a genuine and ordinary Cape road. The only two exceptions to this species of highway that I met with, were the Fort Beaufort Road, and that over the Bruges Mountains, from Graaf Reinet to Somerset.

It is, of course, ridiculous to expect anything approaching to good roads in a colony where labour is so scarce. The solitary good which New South Wales has derived from being a penal settlement is, that it has procured her an admirable set of roads. Road-making, indeed, is so dull, laborious, and unattractive an employment,

that it seems to be peculiarly adapted to convict-labour. The Government lately, on seeking to make convicts acceptable to the Cape colonists, did not forget to point out the advantages which would be conferred on the country in this point; but the bait did not take. The colonists were well aware that the worthy "ticket-of-leave" gentlemen would "take to the road" in more senses than one; and they were not sufficiently alive to the advantages of that interesting Australian mode of life,—"bush-ranging," to wish for its establishment in their own country.

I know nothing more exhilarating and delightful than riding along a mountain-ridge, with a magnificent panorama stretching away below you on both sides. Such was my enjoyment on the Bruges heights. This mountain chain was formerly the boundary of the colony under the Dutch government, beyond which no colonist was allowed to trade with the native tribes. Since that time, in the earlier wars with the Kafirs, it has been the scene of many a bloody conflict between that people and the colonists. The Kafirs had not the slightest pretensions, in point of justice, to penetrate so far to the west; their own frontier lying some one hundred miles to the

east. But they have always been encroaching on the land of the Hottentots, both before and since its occupation by Europeans.

I had now within eye-range the plains of Graaf Reinet sprinkled with antelopes; the sharp, jagged tops of the Tanges Berg, or Toothed Mountain; the white-capped Snewbergen, where I had been half-frozen some time since; the broken Swart Ruggens, or black ridges—a dark track of rocky country, with strata dislocated in a manner to puzzle the profoundest geologist; and the forest range of the Kaga, with its fertile slopes, and well-watered farms: so that my panorama was both varied and beautiful.

The village of Somerset—I beg its pardon for thus terming a "municipality"—is insignificant enough, and contains only five hundred inhabitants. It was formerly a kind of storehouse for the troops on the frontier, but it is not sufficiently to the east for such purposes now. Very large quantities of grain, however, are raised in this district, which is tolerably well watered, and very fertile. Cattle and sheep also abound, and some of the finest flocks of the latter in the whole country belong to Mr. Hart, whose farm is near Somerset.* It is also the residence of the

* The name of this village and of the district itself has recently

Pringle family; Thomas Pringle being *the* poet, *par excellence*, of South Africa.

In this district, and on the very spot where the village of Somerset now stands, tobacco was first raised in the colony, under the care of a Dr. Makrill. Like almost anything else, it grew and flourished admirably on a Cape soil, and is now raised in considerable quantities in various parts of the colony. It is called Boer's tobacco, to distinguish it from the various species of the imported weed. Here again, however, the want of proper energy, so constantly observable in the colonists, whether Dutch or English, is displayed. Every man smokes—and immense numbers also chew—tobacco. The Hottentots of both sexes take heaps of snuff,—not, by the way, up their nostrils, but in their mouth!—and yet tobacco has to be imported to a considerable extent into a country which might not only grow enough for its own wants, but sufficient to supply half the world beside. Every one admits the fact; but the answer is, "want of labour," that eternal complaint of South Africa. There is much truth in it; but there is a considerable "want of

been changed to "Albert;" an absurd alteration, and one not over complimentary to the gallant old colonel whose father gave the original name to the place.

energy" also. The colonists do not sufficiently bear in mind the good old French maxim, "Aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera."

The colony has produced only about 360,000 pounds of tobacco in the year; it might just as well produce a hundred-fold more. There is no reason (save perhaps the "labour" one) why the exports of this article should not increase in the same ratio as that of wool. A very small space of ground will grow a great deal of tobacco, as the reader will admit when he hears that the best authorities state, that "*a square yard of bed*, if made with care, will grow and support 50,000 plants of tobacco!"

But tobacco has put poetry out of my head. Let us return to Mr. Pringle. This gentleman, whose poetry has made known to the general reader many a sweet scene of South Africa, came out in 1820 as the head of a party of settlers. He pitched his tent in Glen Lynden, and in 1834 (or fourteen years later) he wrote the following interesting sketch of his little band:—

"A few words, in conclusion, about our settlement of Glen Lynden. Under the blessing of Providence, its prosperity has been steadily progressive. The friends whom I left there, though they have not escaped some occasional trials and

disappointments, such as all men are exposed to in this uncertain world, have yet enjoyed a goodly share of health, competence, and peace. As regards the first of these blessings, one fact may suffice. Out of twenty-three souls who accompanied me to Glen Lynden, fourteen years ago, there had not, up to the 24th of January last, occurred (so far as I know) a single death, except one, namely, that of Mr. Peter Rennie, who was unfortunately killed by the bursting of a gun in 1825. My father, at the patriarchal age of eighty years, enjoys the mild sunset of life in the midst of his children and grand-children; the latter, of whom there is a large and rapidly-increasing number, having been, with a few exceptions, all born in South Africa. The party have more than doubled their numbers by births alone, during the last twelve years. Several additional families of relatives, and old acquaintances, have also lately joined them.

"Without any pretensions to wealth, and with very little money among them, the Glen Lynden settlers (with some few exceptions) may be said to be in a thriving and, on the whole, very enviable condition. They have abundance of all that life requires for competence and for comfort; and they have few causes of anxiety about the

future. Some of them, who have now acquired considerable flocks of merino sheep, have even a fair prospect of attaining by degrees to moderate wealth.

They have excellent means of education for their children; they have a well-selected subscription library, of about four hundred books; and what is still more important, they have now the public ordinances of religion duly and purely maintained amongst them."

And now, good reader, what think you of the poet's home? Is it not a realization of all the Arcadian simplicity which you had hitherto regarded as a mere dream?

But really I find myself quite on classic ground in this same district of Somerset. To the eastward of the village, on the banks of the Great Fish River, lies Zekoe Kraal; and here the romantic traveller, Le Vaillant, flirted with his lovely heroine, the exquisite Narina. Can you conceive anything more purely poetical than the gallant Frenchman courting the lovely nymph in Sea-cow Kraal? However, the name is here truly of no consequence, especially as I never heard of a hippopotamus being seen in the district during the last forty years; and therefore La Vaillant's flirtations may have been quite free

from the chance of an interruption by one of these river-hogs.

I would that all unwelcome visitors were as scarce at Somerset. But, alas! I found it otherwise. I was going quietly to bed one evening, wearied by a long day's hunting, when close to my feet, and by my bed-side, some glittering substance caught my eye. I stooped to pick it up; but, ere my hand had quite reached it, the truth flashed across me—it was a snake! Had I followed my first natural impulse, I should have sprung away, but not being able clearly to see in what position the reptile was lying, or which way his head was pointed, I controlled myself, and remained rooted breathless to the spot. Straining my eyes, but moving not an inch, I at length clearly distinguished a huge puff-adder, the most deadly snake in the colony, whose bite would have sent me to the other world in an hour or two. I watched him in silent horror: his head was from me—so much the worse; for this snake, unlike any other, always rises and strikes back. He did not move, he was asleep. Not daring to shuffle my feet, lest he should awake and spring at me, I took a jump backwards, that would have done honour to a gymnastic master, and then darted outside the door of the room. With a thick stick, which

I procured, I then returned and settled his worship.

Some parts of South Africa swarm with snakes; none are free from them. I have known three men killed by them in one harvest on a farm in Oliphant's Hoek. There is an immense variety of them, the deadliest being the puff-adder, a thick and comparatively short snake. The bite of this snake will kill occasionally within an hour. One of my friends lost a favourite and valuable horse by its bite, in less than two hours after the attack. It is a sluggish reptile, and therefore more dangerous; for, instead of rushing away, like its fellows, at the sound of approaching footsteps, it half raises its head and hisses. Often have I come to a sudden pull-up on foot and on horseback, on hearing their dreaded warning! There is also the cobra-capello, nearly as dangerous, several black snakes, and the boem-slang (or tree-snake), less deadly, one of which I once shot seven feet long.

The Cape is also infested by scorpions, whose sting is little less virulent than a snake-bite; and the spider called the tarantula, which is extremely dreaded.

Cutting out the wounded part, and a variety of violent remedies, were formerly considered the

only means of preserving life after the bite of any of these creatures. Of late years, however, a Mr. Croft has discovered a remedy which he prepares, and calls his "tincture of life." It is both swallowed and applied externally, and is eminently successful. I have known cases of persons being bitten by puff-adders, applying this remedy instantly, and suffering comparatively slight injury from the bite. I knew a case in which a man was bitten in the leg by the same species of snake. It was necessary to send an hour's journey before the tincture could be procured. Of course the evil had much spread in the meantime; it was applied as soon as obtained, and the man recovered, but he was lamed for life through the injury done by the delay.

It is now considered a species of madness for a Cape farmer to be without "Croft's Tincture of Life."

CHAPTER XV.

SYMPTOMS OF KAFIR DISTURBANCES.—A WARNING.—SOLITARY RIDE ON THE FRONTIER. — AN ATTACK, AND A NARROW ESCAPE. — THROWING OFF THE MASK. — DEEDS OF VIOLENCE. — INSOLENT MESSAGE OF A KAFIR CHIEF.—ABSURDITY OF A DISTANT SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.—FATAL DELAYS.—GLOOMY ASPECT OF AFFAIRS.—KAFIR PREPARATIONS.—A GOVERNOR ENTRAPPED.—RAISING VOLUNTEER TROOPS.—HOPES AND FEARS.—SENTIMENTS OF DIFFERENT PARTIES.—VALIANT "GRIFFINS."—PROPER DUTIES OF BURGHER FORCES.—MISREPRESENTATION OF THE EFFECTS OF THE LATE WAR ON THE COLONISTS.

USING the privilege, which I have long ago claimed in this work, of making strides at will over time and space, I must now beg the reader to imagine me approaching Graham's Town, by a north-easterly route, alone on horse-back. It is in the year 1846. The Kafirs have become very troublesome, and their daily depredations are more daring and more extensive, and oftener accompanied by violence. More than one unlucky farmer, too eager to recover his stolen cattle, has fallen a victim to the assassin ; many

a traveller has been waylaid and plundered; insolence begins to mark the bearing of the chiefs towards British emissaries, and all gives warning of an impending war.

It is rather foolhardy to venture out alone close to the Kafir border: but business presses, and my after-rider is left sick behind me. I am riding along a level ridge of land, but gradually approaching a "poort," or pass between two mountains, which is dark and gloomy looking. I glance suspiciously at every figure that appears on the horizon, and my right hand instinctively seeks one of the small pistols I carry in my shooting-coat pockets. They are tiny affairs, and it is imprudent to carry them; for after all, one is safer unarmed than armed at these times, and less likely to be treated with violence by the black robbers.

A sturdy looking fellow on horseback is approaching me; it is a Dutch boer.

"Good day; where are you going?" he asks.

"To Graham's Town," I reply.

"To Graham's Town! through the poort? you are mad; it is full of Kafirs!"

"So they say always."

"Nay, nay; but old Somerset has sent patrols to scour it, all day."

"Then it must be clean by this time."

"Not a bit of it; those black villains have only to be quiet, and who can find them?"

"Quite true,—but I *must* go on to Graham's Town."

"Well, good day, then; but you will be killed." And the worthy Dutchman made a gesture to intimate that he washed his hands of my blood.

Now, although I had affected the utmost *nonchalance* in conversation with Mynheer, I confess that I did not exactly feel it. A more dangerous-looking place than this abominable "poort" before me, I had never seen. I knew it well, and had passed it before in "piping times of peace," and I had thought how comfortably and conveniently it would hold a few thousand Kafirs, unseen by an enemy, whom they could "pepper" in the narrow defile to their heart's content. The road, too, was all broken, and scattered with huge stones, so that galloping for the greater part of the distance was impossible. Moreover, it wound up hill as I was then going.

At last I entered the poort. On each side of me rose precipitous mountains, covered, three parts of the way up, with dense, impenetrable looking bush, above which (and in some places between it) projected masses of grey rock. I could see

but a few yards before me, as the road was so serpentine, and yet so precipitous. I stopped for a few moments, and listened intently; not a sound caught my ear, save the monotonous chirping of some common bird. I rode forward at a foot's pace, determining to be resigned to be robbed, should such be my destiny, and to hope to escape unscathed in limb.

There is a sudden crash in the bush on my right—some brown creature meets my eye for a moment, and dashes across my path—only a bushbuck, thank God!

Slowly my nag picks his way over the large loose stones in his road, and I find myself halfway through the poort. I stop and look round at the romantic scene. To my left lies a punchbowl, formed by the surrounding mountains, a dark, black, gloomy jungle, across which a gleam of sunshine plays through a cleft in the mountains. The hills, in some parts, are of grey, glittering, bare rock; but near me, and in most other parts, they are covered with the eternal evergreen of the dense bush.

Onwards again. I had now passed about the three-fourths of the poort, and the road was better in surface and far less hilly. The bush continued as thick as ever. Less than half a mile

a-head, I should be once more in the open country, and too near to Graham's Town to feel any alarm of robbery or violence. The comfortable sense of personal security began to creep upon me, the whole nervous system seemed to relax; I found myself laughing at the idle stories of the Dutchman, and even voting myself half a noodle for having determined to *submit* to robbery. My right hand again grasped the pistol in my pocket in mere pastime.

A sudden crash, a sudden start of my horse, and his bridle had been seized by a woolly-headed ruffian: my right hand had instinctively drawn out the pistol, clapped it to the head of the Kafir, snapped it off, down he went like a shot; my spurs were in my horse's sides, and the animal was bounding forth with fright and pain; while "whiz!" "whiz!" "whiz!" and three assagais had whirled past me so closely, that I had felt their wind, while the point of one had grazed the head-stall of my bridle.

How I galloped! it was for my life now, and my horse seemed to know it. What cared he for the huge stones that lay in his way? he cleared them all as he bounded forward at the top of his speed, and in a very few minutes brought me safe and sound into the open table-land, with

Graham's Town lying in a valley below us, and only a few miles distant.

I pulled up; and all that had passed but a few minutes since, seemed like a dream or a phantasy; it had been so sudden, so unexpected; so soon and so strangely terminated! Yet there was the discharged pistol, still in my right hand, and there was the grazed mark on my horse's headstall, bearing indubitable evidence to my half-doubting senses, that I had indeed had my "first brush with the Kafirs." I wonder whether they were the worthy subjects of my *quondam* host, Macomo.

I enjoyed hugely the comforts of mine inn that evening in Graham's Town. I have once or twice in my life ridden a race as a gentleman "jock," and I half blush to own that I have been guilty of a steeple-chase *once*, to say nothing of antelope-coursing in Africa, and stag-hunting in England; but decidedly the most exciting feat of horsemanship I ever performed, was jumping over the prostrate Kafir, and galloping along a break-neck road to save my skin.

Shortly after this little adventure of mine, all disguise seemed to be thrown aside by the Kafirs, and they plainly declared their utter contempt for the English Government.

A Kafir had been taken prisoner while in the act of stealing cattle; and, shortly after his capture, he was dispatched to Graham's Town for trial, handcuffed to a Hottentot culprit, and under the escort of a very small guard. On the road, a large body of Kafirs rushed out, severed the arm of the Hottentot at a blow, and made off again into the bush with their own countryman, the Hottentot's amputated arm dangling to his wrist, before the guard could recover from the panic into which they had been thrown.

The news of this daring act of violence filled all who heard it with indignation. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Eastern province sent to the chief into whose territory the offenders were tracked, to demand that they should be delivered up to justice. The reply of the chief was to the effect, that the governor had better come and fetch them, if he dared. Nobody now doubted that war was inevitable; but the absurdity of a governor six hundred miles from the natural seat of government, at once became apparent. The Lieutenant-Governor did not venture to take the responsibility of an immediate offensive movement on his own shoulders, but dispatched letters to Cape Town to obtain the Governor's authority

and instructions in the matter, thus losing at least twelve days or a fortnight.

Had the Governor and the forces been in Graham's Town, or had a *responsible* and energetic man been Lieutenant-Governor, our troops might have marched within twelve hours on Pato's* kraal, and made the chief himself prisoner, ere he had time to escape, or to call other chiefs to his assistance. Such a *coup-de-main*, if followed by the wholesome example of hanging master Pato as a "particeps criminis," in the affair of the murder, would have struck such terror into the heart of all Kafirland, that I verily believe no war would have followed.

What was done? A fortnight was wasted; during which time, the Kafirs, well knowing that war was now inevitable, had time to arm and prepare for the contest, to assemble and interchange promises of mutual support, and to concoct that struggle which cost the colony some of her best blood, and England nearly two millions of treasure.

What has been the case, even in the war which is now raging? Sir Harry Smith pays a visit to the frontier, holds a meeting of Kafir chiefs, talks "big" (I can fancy my old friend Macomo laugh-

* I think this was the chief.

ing in his sleeve), and then goes back to Cape Town with the impression that it is "all right." No sooner is he gone, than all Kafirland is in a ferment. He jumps on board a steamer, and rushes headlong back into the Kafir country—and then—finds it rather difficult to get out again.

Does any one believe it possible that all this could have happened, had Sir Harry's seat of government been Graham's Town? had he been always within a few miles of the Kafir frontier, watching the rascals with his own eyes, and ready to pounce down on them at a moment's notice, instead of playing at soldiers on the Cape Town parade ground, and waiting for all his information concerning these cunning and restless people to come to him second-hand, over six hundred miles of rough country? The Kafirs themselves see the absurdity of this system, and laugh at it, and profit by it; yet of course, being a giant abuse, it will *not* be remedied. But to return.

After the usual delay, the tocsin of war was sounded. The Kafirs were prepared. For ten years they had been robbing the colony of its herds and flocks, and thereby growing in wealth and prosperity. For ten years they have been learning to use fire-arms, and laying in stores of

guns and gunpowder and bullets. For ten years they have been sending emissaries to lurk about the towns and provinces of the colony to learn its resources, to find out its weak points, its best hiding-places, the roads by which its supplies must be conveyed to their frontier, and the actual amount of men it could bring against them. Right well had they profited by those ten years. The only thing that seemed to be in our favour, was the probability that they would trust too much to their new weapons, and to their newly-acquired horses, and deserting their old system of bush-fighting, come boldly into the plains and meet us in pitched battle. Then, indeed, the European discipline was safe to prevail over them.

But no. The Kafirs were not so vain as we hoped, while they were far too fond of their precious persons to attack us openly, unless in overwhelming numbers. They resolved to stick to the bush, and use their long guns from behind that shelter where an assagai might be more awkward to hurl.

One chance only remained. They might be bad shots, — rather a forlorn hope, this, in a savage, whose eye is so keen, and whose hand so steady. The Kafirs, though apt to shoot high,

proved themselves in the main, excellent marksmen.

No man of any experience in the colony doubted that the coming struggle would be the direst, the fiercest, and the bloodiest that had ever yet been witnessed in South Africa between the white man and the black. All things bore a gloomy aspect on the side of the former. The troops in the colony were few; the governor old and feeble, and unacquainted with the Kafir character; the lieutenant-governor no better. Moreover, it was a war in which everything might be lost by us, and nothing, not even "glory" (the soldier's *ignus fatuus*) gained.

The word went forth for volunteers, and every man hastened to enrol himself a soldier. "Griffins" looked important and felt valorous (except when they did the night patrol duty), old ladies and gentlemen became dreadfully nervous, and fancied every tinkling sound the alarm-bell announcing "Kafirs!" Men who had property at stake, flocks on the frontier, and herds of beeves to make the savages' mouths water—these men, who had mostly fought in the former Kafir war, and knew its horrors and its dangers, looked grave; and though they trembled not like the old ladies and gentlemen aforesaid, neither did

they strut like the valiant "griffins." The women—alas! what must have been their sensations! Read all that is most horrible in the treatment of the sex by barbarians in war; know that even so did the Kafirs act to all who fell into their foul clutches in the previous war; and then, imagine the horror of those who knew not how soon such a fate might again await them.

It was clear that the defence of the colony would now mainly depend on the volunteers, or burgher troops, as they are called; and of this no one should complain; but it was neither fair nor politic to expect them to carry on an offensive warfare in Kafirland. It should be borne in mind that there are no idle men in a colony such as the Cape of Good Hope; every man lives by the sweat of his brow, and can ill afford a day's absence from his ordinary pursuits. No good government would ever depend upon such men to carry on a war, though they might safely reckon on them as a militia to protect their own towns and homesteads.

We often read, during the late Kafir war, and since its termination, of the large sums pocketed by the colonists from government contracts; and it has even been intimated that they like these wars, and look upon them as a source of profit.

I can only say, that I know of very many men who were entirely ruined by the last war; I know that *all* the frontier farmers suffered the severest losses; I know that many were slain; and I know even one of the principal government contractors who was nearly in the gazette at the end of the war, though he was in prosperity at its commencement. If, therefore, the colonists like all this, their tastes are decidedly remarkable; and they should certainly be noted for ever in the page of history as an extraordinary race of men, who became attached to loss of property and loss of life, as eels are said to like being skinned, "from being used to it."

CHAPTER XVI.

EXCITEMENT IN PORT ELIZABETH.—RIVAL TROOPS.—INFANTRY AND CAVALRY.—DRILLING.—SAFETY OF THE TOWN.—FORTIFICATIONS.—RETREAT FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN.—DELAYS OF GOVERNMENT.—PATCHING UP A HOLLOW PEACE.—THE AUTHOR'S OPINIONS OF OUR POLICY TOWARDS THE KAFIRS, ETC.—SURF IN ALGOA BAY.—VIOLENT GALES.—FEARFUL SHIPWRECKS AT NIGHT.—LOSS OF LIFE.—WANT OF A FLOATING BREAKWATER.

THE little town of Port Elizabeth, though nearly one hundred and fifty miles removed from the border where the war seemed about to rage, was full of activity in preparing for the struggle. Out of its three thousand inhabitants, men, women, and children, white, black, and tawny, three or four troops of volunteers (English and Dutch) were speedily raised. Some were on foot, and some were mounted; all were armed with double-barrelled guns; and now and then a stray cutlass (like the venerable "property" swords of a minor theatre) adorned the thigh of some aspiring hero, anxious to decapitate restless Kafirs.

Captains were chosen by the respective troops by ballot or by acclamation ; and the captains in turn selected their lieutenant, sergeant, and corporal. *Esprit-de-corps* became strongly developed ; "Ours!" was heard from the lips of many a valorous dealer in soap, as often as from those of the last joined ensign of a heavy marching regiment. The cavalry corps (!) felt vastly superior to the infantry ditto ; while the latter congratulated themselves on being able to keep their "footing" on duty, which was more than the former could boast of regarding their seats.

How was it to be expected that Mr. Chopkins, who had never been across a horse in his life till he came to South Africa, and since that event had only ambled about on a "trippler" warranted not to shy, should "stick on," when the said "trippler," exasperated and alarmed at the explosion of a gun between his ears, elevated his heels, rounded his back and made the saddle, where Mr. Chopkins should have been, an inclined plane of sixty or seventy degrees ? Chopkins did his best, and bore his tumbles like a man ; and what could valour ask more ?

Seriously, however, I very much doubt whether the mounted gentlemen could claim any supe-

riority over the "infantry," except—the additional facility of running away.

The drilling was unique and entertaining, especially as it was under the superintendence of the captains, who were in blissful ignorance of the manual and platoon exercises, and who were therefore obliged to invent a system of manœuvres and tactics of their own, thereby displaying an originality of genius and a boldness of conception that would have done honour to a Napoleon, or which would, at all events, have puzzled the hero amazingly.

Firing at marks, which nobody could hit for the first fortnight, constituted a considerable portion of the exercise, and much gunpowder and lead were wasted in vain endeavours to bore holes in an imaginary Kafir.

Nevertheless, the people were in earnest, and most creditably came forward, armed and mounted at their own expense, to proffer their time and means in assisting to repel the threatened invasion. It must be confessed that they were not over-anxious to be marched away into Kafirland, and chase the savages among their mountain fastnesses, to be shot at like soldiers, *minus* the shilling a day, and without the chance of glory if they fell, or fought never so much like heroes.

And I have before remarked on the injustice of expecting volunteer troops to carry on an aggressive warfare.

In one respect Port Elizabeth seemed to be the most favoured town in the eastern province. In case of the worst happening, and the Kafirs becoming masters of the colony—an event which positively seemed probable to some—they had the shipping in Algoa Bay to retreat to. Considering, however, the three thousand inhabitants of the town, and the six or seven coasters that lay off it, I must confess that the place of refuge seemed a very forlorn hope indeed.

"Were there no fortifications?" asks the reader.

Certainly; there was Fort Frederick, perched up on the hill, with five or six grim-looking cannon peering over its walls; but, unfortunately, the cannon were scaly and the walls shaky; in addition to which untoward circumstances, the fort commanded any point but the town and its approaches!

There was a powder-magazine, by-the-by, with plenty of powder in it; but then it was stuck a long way out of the town for safety; and it would have been far more difficult to have fortified and defended the magazine than the town

itself. There were the commissariat buildings certainly, with a good-sized yard surrounded by a ten-feet wall, and they really might be fortified against any besieging means that Kafirs could employ. The only drawback was, that being situate just outside the town, at the opposite end to where the Kafirs would approach, the town would be left entirely at the mercy of the savages. To this spot, however, it was resolved to convey all the women and children, in case of serious danger; though one benevolent-minded individual suggested that they should be huddled together in the church, the vaults being previously crammed with combustibles, in the Guy Fawkes style, and then blown up, "rather than fall into the hands of the savages." I am afraid that this gentleman was voted "a brute" by the ladies, and I hope he was not married.

Meantime the operations on the frontier were conducted in the most sluggish style. Fresh messages were sent to the Kafir chiefs; threats, promises, and entreaties were lavished by our weak government, and the wily Kafirs pretended to meet them half way with alacrity. They were, in truth, only gaining time, waiting to concentrate their forces, and provide for all chances; and yet, with the vile act of aggression I have

mentioned still unavenged; to say nothing of the thousand acts of robbery before, and still perpetrated, the governor began to talk about "peace," "allaying public excitement," and a dozen such phrases; till positively the burgher forces were told that their services would not be required, and that there was every reason to believe that everything would soon be upon the former footing. I believe that not one man of sense throughout the colony placed faith in these hollow announcements. I am confident that no man who had the least experience of the Kafir character doubted that war, deadly, fierce, bloody, and costly war, was in store for the Cape frontier.

No matter; the governor and his wise officials had decided that there was to be nothing of the kind, and "Peace," therefore, became the word muttered by the colonist as he laid aside his arms, half fearing to relinquish them. "Peace!" became the cry yelled forth exultingly by the Kafir, as he sharpened his assagai in his hut, and prepared for "war."

And now my "personal experiences" are drawing to a close, for it was shortly after this time that I quitted the colony. I watched the subsequent events with deep interest, both on account

of the many dear friends I left behind me, and because I loved the colony itself, and felt that so fine a land ought not to be for ever exposed to the plunder and violence of a nation of irreclaimable barbarians, the most dishonest, faithless, bloodthirsty race in the land of Ham.

The history of the last Kafir war has, however, been written by abler pens than mine, and by personal actors in all its scenes, To them I refer the reader who may wish to trace the events subsequently to the time when I quitted the colony. It has not been my object to do more in sketching the commencement of the war, than to show that it was not provoked by the colonists themselves, as has more than once been asserted by the ill-informed, though self-satisfied, portion of the English press. My opinions, too, freely expressed on the subject of our relations with the Kafirs, our policy towards them, and the defects and blunders of the whole system, may not have much weight with "the powers that be;" still, I believe them to be based on a true appreciation of the Kafir character and the wants of the colony, and I know them to be as honestly and sincerely felt, as they are unhesitatingly recorded. On one point I am very positive,—the absolute necessity of fixing the seat of govern-

ment of the colony in Graham's Town, or of erecting the Eastern Province into a separate and distinct colony, with an independent governor. The former would be the better and more feasible plan.

Before I close this chapter I will give the reader a sketch of one fearful scene—not the only one of the same kind—that I witnessed in Algoa Bay during my residence in Port Elizabeth.

There is at all times a great rolling surf in Algoa Bay; but when the wind blows violently from the south-east, it is tremendous. The bay is completely open to this point, and it seems as if the whole Indian Ocean were being driven into it by the gale.

At these times the greatest anxiety is felt for the shipping at anchor off the town, and the probability of their being able to ride out the storm. Topmasts are struck, and every species of cable let go. The lightest laden vessels fare best, because they have less strain on their anchors, and the holding-ground is decidedly good.

One of these gales had been blowing for three days, and constantly increasing in violence, till there seemed to be little chance of all the ships at anchor weathering it much longer. Signals

had already been made by two of the ships, "Parted one anchor," when night began to set in dark, black, and stormy. Many were the evil forebodings among the inhabitants of the little town.

At about two o'clock in the morning the bell on the market-place was heard pealing loudly. I sprang from my bed, hurried on my clothes, and hastened down to the beach, well knowing what that alarm betokened. The port-captain had discovered with his night-glass two ships parted from their anchors and drifting to the shore. Tar-barrels were immediately lighted, and by their blaze we could discover the doomed vessels slowly approaching destruction. I hastened to the jetty, a long wooden structure, formed at great expense, and projecting at that time a considerable distance into the bay.

As I stood watching intently the two drifting vessels I saw that they were foul of each other, and apparently coming right across the jetty itself, for in that direction the current set. At length one of them seemed to part from the other; and now by the blaze of the tar-barrels I could detect the sailors on board rushing about frantically to execute orders which were, alas! of little avail. They seemed to be alarmed at the

prospect of striking against the jetty, over which the waves constantly broke, though it was twenty feet above the water.

The nearer vessel was now within a few yards of the jetty, and at the mercy of the breakers. One tremendous sweep of a wave, and she seemed to be lifted over the wooden structure when down she came crashing right through it, and parting the huge piles on which it rested as one would thrust aside the underwood that impeded his progress. She positively went through the jetty, leaving the end of it isolated from the rest. Ten of the crew had sprung from the vessel's deck on to this severed piece of the jetty, and their shout of joy at their safety was audible for a moment above the roar of the elements. How short-lived was the triumph!

Scarcely had the poor fellows escaped on to this place of refuge when the second ship was hurled with the whole force of a tremendous breaker right against the very spot, and with one fell crash it disappeared into the boiling waters, and nothing was ever seen or heard again of those who had leapt to it for safety, till their bodies were washed ashore many hours later!

In a few minutes more both of these vessels, were stranded on some rocks which jut out from

a portion of the shore, and, within another hour, two more ships were there also. As daylight broke, it was a fearful sight to behold! Within hail of the shore, near enough for us to distinguish their features without the aid of a glass, were the crews of four vessels in momentry expectation of destruction, and we unable to help them! No boat could live in the surf that boiled and broke over the rocks between us and them. Some on shore were vainly trying to hurl a rope far enough to reach the wrecks; but it fell short each time by at least half the distance. The danger now was, that the ships would go to pieces—and one seemed about to do so every instant,—and then nothing but a miracle could save one creature on board them.

At length a small howitzer was brought down to the beach, charged with powder, and, with a piece of iron with a rope made fast to it and coiled up, the other end of the rope being attached to a post on shore. The howitzer was pointed at the mast of one of the ships and fired. Hurrah!—the rope lay over the vessel, and in a few minutes more the crew were coming one by one, hand-over-hand, along it, and reached the shore in safety. The same plan was pursued with regard to the other vessels; and all were thus saved

except three or four, who, in madness, had sprung into the surf and perished instantly.

Fourteen lives, however, were lost, and four fine vessels dashed to pieces in this fearful south-easter. The sum required for a floating break-water in Algoa Bay would be large, no doubt, but small in comparison to the amount of evil constantly done to the shipping, and the number of lives so often sacrificed for want of it. But, in truth, "public works" of almost every description have been sadly neglected in this colony, which has never enjoyed the advantage of being a "pet" one.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ESSENTIALS OF A COLONIAL GOVERNOR.—EFFECTS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF CHOOSING ONE.—FEELINGS OF THE COLONISTS ON THE SUBJECT.—PATRONAGE.—ADMINISTRATION OF LAW.—INTERPRETERS.—CIVIL COMMISSIONERS.—MAGISTRATES.—PUNISHMENTS.—RARITY OF GREAT CRIMES.—JUSTIFICATION OF THE COLONISTS IN RESISTING THE IMPORTATION OF CONVICTS.—WANT OF LABOUR OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.—INSTANCES.—OBJECTIONS TO EMIGRATION TO THE CAPE ANSWERED.—CAPABILITIES OF THE COUNTRY TO SUPPORT A LARGE POPULATION.—UNAPPROPRIATED LAND IN AND BEYOND THE COLONY.—FAREWELL TO THE CAPE.

WHAT are the essentials of a colonial governor? That he should have fought at Waterloo, be a major-general, know nothing of the colony he is sent to, and be too old to learn anything.

Should the reader be disposed to doubt that all, or any of these qualifications are necessary, I can simply reply, that they are apparently considered so by the English government in general, and the minister for the colonies in particular. In selecting generals to lead our armies in the field, we are not in the habit of turning to the list of decayed statesmen to fill the place; we are too

disposed to think that men trained to arms and distinguished in many a hard-fought battle, will be found rather more competent. On the contrary, in choosing the representative of the highest civil authority in the state to preside over the councils of one of our colonies; to exercise the functions which are peculiarly within the province of statesmanship, we pass by all whose life has been spent in conducting the business of the state, all who have been trained to the senate, all who have been accustomed to deliberate on civil matters, and we select some old military martinet, who has fought like a tiger in his day, who hardly knows the geography of the colony he is to govern, is perfectly ignorant of the habits and requirements of its people, and is as little likely to conciliate the regard, as he is to command the respect, of the unhappy land which is to pay him five thousand pounds a year to mismanage it. If the force of absurdity can go much farther than this, I am at a loss to conceive what are its limits.

The only good appointment of a governor of the Cape Colony made during the last thirty years was that of Sir Henry Pottinger. In saying this I am not disparaging the brave soldiers who have from time to time held the same post, one

whit the more than I should be detracting from the legal ability of the Lord Chancellor, by expressing a doubt of his medical knowledge, I concede to the Sir Georges, Sir Peregrines, Sir Harrys, and the rest of the K.C.B.s, with their medals, stars, and decorations, the characters of great generals and brave soldiers, but I cannot allow that they are even respectable statesmen, nor such as should ever have been entrusted with the important functions committed to their charge by an unwise government. I am firmly convinced that such appointments have greatly retarded the progress of the several colonies over which they have presided, and I know that it is so felt by the colonists themselves. They say most justly, that it is unfair to place their dearest interests in the hands of incompetent persons, merely as an act of favouritism or "jobbery"—there is no other word for it—on the part of the home government. Such want of principle tends deeply to estrange the affections of a colony from the mother country. It is unjust, unwise, impolitic.

On the occasion of the appointment of Sir Henry Pottinger—a statesman, and a man of approved talent—one of the most influential men in the colony wrote to me thus:—"We have received the news of this nomination with the

greatest pleasure and the sincerest gratitude. It seems to us an earnest that the Home Government have at length our real interests at heart." Unfortunately, Sir Henry did not remain long in the colony, being removed to a more agreeable and more lucrative appointment.

The only thing that can be urged in favour of the present system is, that it saves the expense of the two separate appointments of a governor and a commander-in-chief. But why not let the senior staff-officer in the colony take the latter office? The military operations in a colony do not require the exercise of first-rate generalship. Many of them never have the least taste of warfare. Even at the Cape, with its disturbed frontier, the commanding officer of the Cape Mounted Rifles (Colonel Somerset) has always proved himself the most efficient man to conduct the operations against the Kafirs: and naturally so; because, from his long residence in the country, he is better acquainted with their habits and style of warfare, and better known to, and more dreaded by, them, than any other soldier.

The truth is, that the governorship of a colony is looked upon by the ministry of the day as a convenient piece of patronage wherewith to reward any old general who may be considered to have

"claims" on the government. The interests of the colony are the last thing considered. It would be well if for the future our ministers would forego such patronage; or, if they *must* bestow governorships on decayed veterans, let it be that of Carisbrooke Castle or the Tower of London, instead of New South Wales or the Cape of Good Hope. Till this is done, I very much doubt whether even the representative system will fully place the Cape Colony on a fair footing.

Dutch law prevails at the Cape; but the English Common Law is being so fast engrafted on it, that its primitive simplicity is fast disappearing. The Supreme Court is presided over by three judges, who sit in Cape Town. They also go the circuit twice a-year, sitting and hearing both civil and criminal cases at the chief town of every district. Trial by jury prevails only in criminal matters, the judge pronouncing the verdict in all civil causes. Attorneys are allowed to plead in the Circuit Court, but not in the Supreme Court, the privilege of addressing the latter being reserved to the bar. Sworn interpreters attend each Circuit Court to translate the English questions into Dutch for the Dutch and coloured witnesses, and their replies again into English, all proceedings being conducted in the latter tongue.

These interpreters generally perform their duty with much fidelity and ability, but the style of their language is occasionally very amusing. In a case where a Hottentot woman had been found guilty of the murder of her husband, the chief justice, in the course of an impressive address to the culprit, said, "Woman! where is thy husband? Alas! he is 'gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns.'" The worthy interpreter, in a sharp, abrupt tone, said literally (in Dutch), "Woman! where's your man? He 's gone across the boundary, and he won't come back again!" Whereat the woman looked rather puzzled.

Each "district" of the colony, answering in some measure to "county" in England, is presided over by a civil commissioner, who is the chief magistrate, collector of the revenue, and representative of government within his own division. Their salaries vary from three hundred to five hundred pounds a-year, with a house, and certain allowances.

In addition to these, there are resident magistrates appointed to most towns of sufficient importance, not being the residences of civil commissioners. These same magistrates are not very hard-worked, their principal occupation being the sentencing of drunken Hottentots to various pains

and penalties. The sentences generally include a little wholesome correction in the way of a few lashes. The coloured people, however, are not easily alarmed at such things—their skins do not appear to be half so sensitive as their stomachs. The simple words "rice-water" produce far more consternation than "three dozen lashes." This rice-water is given to certain very refractory criminals while in prison: it is found to be just sufficient to support life from day to day, without satisfying the cravings of hunger; and as the Hottentots generally dispose of two pounds of meat *per diem*, with a proportionate quantity of bread, it may easily be imagined how they shudder at the idea of four or five days' rice-water.

Criminals sentenced to any lengthened imprisonment are either sent to Robben Island, in the mouth of Table Bay, or worked in gangs on the roads and public works. It is a great credit to the colony that this class of offenders are few. Indeed, great crimes are rare at the Cape. During the five years I spent there, I believe there were not more than three executions for murder. Housebreaking is almost unknown, and robbery for the most part is confined to petty thefts. I felt safe at all times in leaving a few sovereigns

or a handful of silver lying about in my bedroom; but a heap of coppers had attractions that were occasionally irresistible, and a halfpenny or two were likely to be abstracted, to purchase a little snuff, or a *soupee* of "Cape smoke."

Under such circumstances, it was most natural that the colonists should resist to the utmost the attempt to make their country a penal settlement. The mischief and demoralization which would be caused among the coloured classes, by the importation of hardened and experienced criminals, are beyond all power of exaggeration. It would be difficult to point out a land on the face of the globe likely to suffer so severely from such a cause as the Cape. The plea that they were to be ticket-of-leave men, makes the case so much the worse. Were they worked in chains, and under the constant *surveillance* of a guard, they would at least be able to perpetrate less mischief, and spread less contamination, than by mixing with their fellow (free) labourers. In spite of the indignation expressed freely by a certain portion of the English press, at the pertinacity with which the Cape Colonists resisted this vile attempt to turn South Africa into a den of thieves, every one with a common sense of justice, and a little experience of colonial society, will say that

they acted well and nobly; and, making a fair allowance for excited feelings, with far more forbearance than could have been expected from men whose very security of life and property had been so iniquitously menaced.

Though the Cape thus justly scorns the aid (?) of convicts, she is bitterly in want of free labour of almost every description. To commence with domestic servants. Can anything be more annoying and disgusting to a good housewife than having to depend on a set of dirty, drunken Hottentots? And yet there are scarcely any other servants to be obtained, and even they must, at times, be *entreated* to come and serve you. When the rarity occurs of an emigrant ship arriving, there is a perfect rush to the beach to offer engagements to the new-comers. Twenty-five, thirty, or six and thirty pounds a year, are freely offered as housemaid's wages to any raw country girl fresh imported, who has probably never been in service before. After all it is generally a bad bargain; as these girls are constantly spoilt by the idle life they lead on the voyage, and the utter absence of restraint and proper supervision on board ship. "Jack" is a very good fellow in his way, but he is by no means "the young housemaid's best companion."

Farm servants are equally scarce. A shepherd will command from fifty to seventy pounds a year, a house to live in, and excellent rations for himself and family, however numerous. These men, too, when they have had a little education, may often become large sheep-owners themselves. Merchants and tradesmen residing in town, who have sheep-farms at a distance, are happy to place such persons in charge of their flocks, giving them a third of the annual increase for their remuneration, which in time starts them with a handsome flock.

Artizans of all kinds are sure to find employment. The lowest wages paid to journeymen are five shillings per diem. Sawyers, carpenters, bricklayers, and smiths, receive much more. Plumbers and glaziers are in great request. If you are unfortunate enough to smash a pane of glass, you may frequently wait a week or ten days before *the* solitary glazier can find time to come and mend it. When I resided in Port Elizabeth there was but one glazier (in a town of three thousand inhabitants), and if sent for he would probably reply with great composure and dignity.

"Mr. C—'s compliments, and some day next week he will see what he can do for you!" This

respectable man of putty was strongly addicted to Cape smoke.

Labour occupies, in a colony, a position the very reverse of what it does at home. *Here* labour goes begging—in a colony the employers are the petitioners. Your tailor must be "solicited" to make you a coat, though the money for his labour be quite ready for him. Your bootmaker "can't attend to you just yet." The watchmaker keeps your watch three months, when he has only to fit a lunette glass to it.

It is a bad state of things. I have a great respect for the "rights of labour," and I think a day's work deserves a day's pay; but when the supply of work so far exceeds that of workmen, the employer is placed in an unfair position, and a set of idle fellows, by working only now and then, make decent livelihoods—and bacchanalian glaziers, cricketing tailors, and horseracing watchmakers are prosperous men.

Two objections are raised to emigration to South Africa. The one is the disturbed state of its frontier—the other its inability to maintain a large population. I grant that the first is a valid objection to some extent; but it will be a disgrace to Great Britain if it is allowed to remain. The Kafir question *must* be settled;

but, truly, some more energetic measures might have emanated from the combined wisdom of the House of Commons than the appointment of a couple of commissioners to go to the Cape, and "inquire into our relations with the native tribes." To inquire why it is that when we make absurd treaties with savages, they are broken as often as suits the convenience of the latter! why, when we trust thieves and liars, we are robbed and deceived! The Government should have crowned the absurdity, by insisting that each member of the commission should be, what Sydney Smith termed "that favourite Whig animal—a barrister of five years' standing."

With regard to the second objection — the inability of South Africa to support an extensive population—I maintain that it is an erroneous one. There are about five millions of acres of government land in the colony unappropriated, and a very large proportion of them cultivable to any extent. These, with the thirty millions of acres in the possession of the settlers, would support a population at least fifty times as large as that which now occupies them.

But it is not within the limits of the colonial boundary alone that emigration and settlement should be confined. Beyond the Orange River

are boundless plains of some of the most fertile land in the world, well watered, and superior in every respect to that within the colony. Immense tracts of it are utterly unpopulated, being considered by the bordering natives as too cold for them—yet a beautiful climate, as I can personally testify. Within one space of one hundred square miles, which I could point out on the map, there are but three or four kraals. Yet the land is unusually fertile, intersected by rivers, and here and there interspersed with noble forests. Why should not such tracts be colonized? They could be purchased from the native chiefs (if, indeed, there are any to claim them) for a mere song: and if it be objected that they are so distantly removed from the sea-coast, I answer, that they are much nearer to it than many, if not most, of the back settlements of Australia.

I would much rather emigrate to the fertile plains beyond the Orange River, than to any Canterbury settlement, puffed and paraded by associations and high-sounding names.

It is urged by one portion of the English press that we should contract instead of extending our frontier in South Africa. This would be the proper course, undoubtedly, if the present method of government and defence were to be persisted

in: but grant the Cape colonists the fullest liberty to govern and protect themselves, and the wider their frontier, the more secure will be their possessions.

Nearly five years after I first set foot, a cast-away, in South Africa, I stood watching the little brig at anchor, that was to carry me away from those hospitable shores. I will not deny that a certain "home-sickness" had taken possession of my heart—that I longed to revisit the land of my birth. The *amor patriæ* that had failed to make its voice heard when I was quitting England for years—or perchance, as it seemed, for ever—now spoke in seductive accents, leading my thoughts to the scenes of early associations. I suppose it is always thus: and no one can ever forget his country for ever.

> "Nescio quâ natale solum dulcedine captos
> Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui."

And yet I was very sorrowful. I loved the land where I had dwelt so long, the freedom of its boundless plains and untrodden mountains, the excitement of its wild sports, the beauty of its climate, and above all, the warm-hearted, kind, single-minded, and hospitable people, who had made it their adopted country. To feel that

I was about to lose all these caused me many a pang, and almost made me waver in the resolution I had taken to depart. It was too late, however, to retreat—all my arrangements, both in England and the colony, were complete—the die was cast.

"The Blue Peter is hoisted, sir. The skipper's gone on board," was the message delivered to me from a boatman.

Half an hour later, "Farewells" to some of the dearest friends I had on earth had been uttered, and I found myself once more a ship's passenger with a space of seven feet by four for my "state" room.

As if to prolong the saddening thoughts which crowded in my mind, the wind veered round, so that the captain determined not to sail till the moon rose, several hours later; and thus we lay in sight of the town, and of all that I regretted to part from.

"It 's dry work, sir, is sorrow," said the worthy skipper, noticing my abstracted air. "Take a glass of grog now, and turn in—the first thing in the morning we 're off, please God,"—which, after all, was only a free translation of Horace's

"Nunc vino pellite curas—
Cras ingens iterabimus æquor!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

MY FIRST LION-HUNT.

A SKETCH ILLUSTRATIVE OF LIFE AT A CAPE OUTPOST.

LITTLE did I think when first I saw the gallant 47th on parade in my native garrison town of Slowpuddle—when I watched the gleaming bayonets and bright barrels borne by the privates, and gazed with envy and pride on the glittering swords and shiny boots of the officers—when I looked with a mingled feeling of awe and respect on the Colonel's cocked-hat, the Major's extensive corporation, and the senior Captain's miraculous whiskers—little did I dream *then*, I repeat, of the dreary drudgery and wretched loneliness, the miseries and annoyances, the hardships and disgusts, awaiting such holiday-looking gentry as soldiers; or still less did I imagine that I should live to vote a soldier's life, from my own experience of it, in some of its phases,

the dullest, stupidest, and most wearisome on the face of the globe.

And you, my fair reader (If I *should* have a "fair reader"), could you ever imagine that dear Ensign Smoothly, or that elegant Captain Fitztwaddle, encased in leather "don't-mention-'ems' of dingy yellow, a wide-awake hat, a coarse blue shirt, and no jacket at all; their wavy locks all uncombed and uncurled, and three weeks' beard on their sunburnt visages? Alas! even thus have I seen them in South Africa, hunting Kafirs or doing outpost duty—and thus have I been myself.

At the age of sixteen, having gone through the usual time-honoured British system of education—spinning hexameters in Latin, and making violent efforts to understand the choruses of a solitary Greek play, which had puzzled five hundred commentators (including "no end" of Bishops)—having *done* six books of "Euclid," and read "Télémaque" and the "Henriade," in an accent which would have been utterly unintelligible to any native of "La Belle France,"—having attained a moderate knowledge of the multiplication table, and a complete mastery of the Heathen Mythology as recorded in Lempriere—my father considered that I had "finished"

my education. Of course I was of the same opinion, though I have since imbibed some faint doubts whether I had even actually *begun* it.

Then came the important question, "what is the boy to be?" My father voted for the law, but my mother protested against that profession, on the ground that the professional costume was so exceedingly unbecoming, and that all lawyers had bad digestions. My father, though he considered the first objection trivial, and the second very doubtful in point of fact, like a well-trained husband forbore to press the matter, and suggested "physic." My mother hereupon grew horrified—not that she objected to my being a physician, like that dear old Dr. Doolittle, the family physician, who prescribed the family purges and pocketed the family fees; but she had been told that every doctor must go through a course of preliminary study, which included surgical operations and walking the hospitals — two things which she pronounced "dreadful," and was quite convinced she could never love a son of hers who had meddled in anything so "shocking." Of course my share of maternal love was not to be sacrificed, and therefore physic *was* thrown to the dogs.

My mother wished me to be a parson and

preach "heavenly sermons," like the Reverend Joseph Sleekly, whose ministry she attended three times every Sunday. My father, on the contrary, thought "no great shakes" of parsons in general, or the Reverend Joseph in particular, while my own indignation at the idea of becoming anything so "spooney" was unbounded. I declared for the Army and nothing else; and hinted that if I did not enter her Majesty's service as a Cornet of Life Guards, or an Ensign of "Heavies" at least, I should feel myself compelled to accept the magic shilling and bear my musket as a full private.

Empty as the threat might have proved, it had its effect, and, coupled with the asseverations, of my old uncle, Major Greenboy of the H.E.I.C.S., that I was a fine lad and should make a capital soldier, the army was at length reluctantly permitted to be my profession. Messrs. Cox, and a friend at the Horse Guards, managed the rest, and in due time I mounted the uniform of her Majesty's well-known Irish regiment, the —th.

I am not writing my life, but only a chapter from the book of its miseries, and so it strikes me that I am dwelling a little too long on preliminaries. Let me make amends by giving the reader a sudden "lift," and placing him down

safe and sound in Graham's Town in the Division of Albany, the capital of the eastern province of the Cape Colony, where, in the Year of Grace, 184–, my regiment found itself quartered.

Graham's Town is decidedly and essentially a stupid town. It has about six thousand inhabitants, who are nearly all of the shopkeeping class. Mercy on me! I see the indignation with which that one plebeian word would be read by the Graham's Town *soi-disant* "merchants," but stern truth compels me to call people and things by their right names; and as every one of these same merchants will sell you a single beaver hat and six pairs of tenpenny socks, I refer it to an impartial reader whether I could in strict veracity alter the title I have bestowed on them. Suppose I meet them half-way and give them the more colonial-sounding appellation of *store*-keepers. These same store-keepers, who are as 'cute as any citizens of the Model Republic, are most unfortunately "snobby" in dress, manners, language, ideas, and *equipments*, if I may so term their domestic and household possessions, from the wives of their bosoms, down to the carpets of their drawing-rooms. Still they *have* their good points; among which I reckon pre-eminent

their intense love of an officer in her Majesty's land service. This affection might, under some circumstances, be inconvenient to the objects of it; but where its effects are displayed in

"Nightly smiles and daily dinners"

bestowed on the red-coats, of a verity the latter have no cause to grumble.

Notwithstanding, therefore, the tameness and sameness of Graham's Town, we managed to get through a day tolerably well there, by the aid of billiards, an occasional bit of shooting or hunting (conglomerate sports at the Cape), and the dinners aforesaid, where the viands were superior to the hosts, and the wines better than either. Now and then, too, we were invited to a ball, where there was a plentiful supply of book-muslin and champagne, custards, blanc-manges, bright eyes and other luxuries; and where we waltzed, gallopaded and polkaed with the thermometer at 80° in the shade, and no Gunter's or anybody else's ices to cool us afterwards. Occasionally we got up a ball ourselves, which was as noisy and select (Heaven save the mark!) as garrison balls in general; but we preferred pic-nics and found them more successful. Our great consolation was, that we were better off than other poor devils on worse stations—our great dread (among

us "subs") lest we should be sent on "outpost" duty.

One day—malediction on it!—news reached our colonel in the shape of a letter from Ensign Tadpole, that he the said ensign was seriously ill at the "Blink Post," whither he had been dispatched some six weeks previously in command of fifteen men. Great was the consternation when this intelligence was announced to the regiment—not from affection for Tadpole, though we liked the fellow well enough—but from the fear that pervaded every lieutenant and ensign in the corps lest *he* should be selected to supply the sick man's place. Of course the lot fell to *me*, as every ill lot always has done; and I received orders to take the command of the "Blink Post," *vice* Tadpole invalided.

"I say, old fellow, give me the horns of the first buffalo you shoot, will you?" said little Teddy Buttondale (whose father was an army tailor), as soon as he heard of my *promotion*. "I want a pair confoundedly."

"Wait till you 're married, Teddy," replied my savage self.

"I 'd rather have a Kafir scalp for *my* part," chimed in Tom Butter.

"Mayhap the doctor 'd like the rest of the

villain's carcass," added Phelim O'Rafferty, Esq., of Blazes Castle, County Meath.

"I hear it's a capital place for hunting," said one.

"Yes—stolen cattle," said another; "fine sport!"

"They tell me there's out-and-out shooting," added another.

"Ah, certainly! Kafirs and other black game —eh?"

All this was exceedingly pleasant for me to hear. However, I determined to meet my fate with stoic fortitude, and next morning was cantering away from Graham's Town to take command of "the forces" at "Blink Post," fifty miles distant. These fifty miles were merely an ordinary day's journey for a Cape horse, which frequently travels eighty or ninety miles between sunrise and sunset, and with no other food than grass and water, of a quality which any respectable English nag would reject with indignation.

The road was vile—a compound of a stone-mason's yard and a rabbit-warren, and lay through as dreary and barren a district, for the greater part of the journey, as the eye of man ever rested on. Now and then a hill side clothed with various coloured bush gave me a

faint idea of the picturesque; while a long, gloomy-looking range of mountains on the right occasionally presented a pleasing aspect in the grotesque outlines of some of its points, or in the broken light and shade caused by their different heights. No doubt, too, there was much food for the botanist or the geologist; but there was little enough for myself or my nags, and so my good humour by no means increased on my route.

At length I reached my destination, and found Tadpole with a beard like a Jew "old clo'" man, and looking as unlike an invalid as possible, as he sat smoking a short-pipe and drinking pale ale.

"Ah! my dear Green" (Green, by-the-by, is *my* name—or, if it's not, it will do as well as any other), "I'm glad to see you," said Tadpole, "and sorry too. Oh, dear! this is killing me."

"*Which?*" inquired I, "the pipe or the ale? if it's the latter, you'd better pass the bottle to me, for I'm confoundedly thirsty."

Tadpole passed the bottle accordingly, but explained that it was the *station* that was killing him. I never saw the fellow looking better—making due allowances for his private condition.

The truth is, I perceived that the illness was all "flam;" but Master Tadpole wanted to bid adieu to the "Blink Post"—a desire I afterwards learnt to appreciate fully.

"What sort of people are there about here?" I inquired.

Tadpole looked bewildered.

"People!" he exclaimed.

"Yes—people!" I repeated.

"None," said Tadpole curtly.

"Hang it, man," rejoined I, half angrily, "there must be *some one* within call.

"Well—there's Jan Rens, the fat Dutch boer, who can't speak English, and hates the sight of a soldier; he only lives thirteen miles off. Then there's Piet Botha, the black man, who breeds horses which the Kafirs always help themselves to; he only lives *seven* miles off. *He's* sure to give you a call in a day or two."

"What? a black man?" I inquired indignantly.—It is astonishing the contempt one has for colour in the land of its birth.

"Yes," answered the Ensign, quietly, "he always pays a visit here every second or third day."

"If he calls on me, I shall kick him out," I asseverated most savagely.

"No, you won't," pursued Tadpole, in the same

imperturbable tone: "you see he calls when he wants you to join him in a hunt, and you *must* go, whether you like it or not."

"What the devil do you mean?" I asked, in mingled rage and surprise.

"Why—you see, Piet Botha's horses are always being stolen by the Kafirs. As soon as he discovers his loss, he rushes to this post, and it 's part of our duty to turn out and follow the spoor (trail) you know."

"How disgusting!" I exclaimed; "why we 're no better than detective policemen."

"*Better!*" said Tadpole, with a smile: "you wouldn't find a 'detective' to change places with you in a hurry, I fancy. My dear fellow, the life of a policeman is luxurious compared with that of an officer in the army at a Cape outpost."

"But is there no help for it?" cried I, dolorously.

"There are only two ways of getting out of it, that I know of," responded Tadpole. "One is"—here he looked very knowing—"to be afflicted as I am: the other—to sell out!"

"The first won't answer a second time, I fear," said I; "and the second is not to be thought of. After all, what life is there like a soldier's?"

"None, I believe—except a 'detective's.'"

The next day Tadpole departed, leaving me alone in command of "Blink Post."

I now began to survey the country surrounding my station. It may be described in the fewest words. Dense bush, rocky hills, barren ground, no river, and no inhabitants, save a few Hottentots who hung about the Post. Tadpole had certainly drawn no darker picture of the place than it deserved. Society was of course out of the question. The fat Dutchman, who didn't speak English and hated soldiers, was not to be thought of, especially as he lived thirteen miles off. The black man was even more out of the question. How I envied the men under my command who could chat and joke with one another!

I went out shooting. What game could exist on those barren plains? I came home wearied and empty-handed.

I inquired if there were any wild beasts in the neighbourhood? Elephants were strongly suspected to wander in some parts of that dense bush: but how the deuce was any one to get at them? They never emerged from it on *our* side, and nothing in human shape but a Kafir could ever penetrate to the other. Buffaloes were believed in; but were equally unattainable.

Several circumstances had prevented me from bringing my books with me. There was not one at the station except a copy of "Watts's Hymns" and an odd volume of "Jack Sheppard"—the one belonging to Corporal Mac Bean, and the latter to Private Mulligan.

Did a traveller ever pass that way? Never: it lay quite out of the road to any place at all; though admirably adapted to be seized in war-time by a few hundred Kafirs rushing suddenly from the dark bush and overpowering the little garrison of sixteen souls.

For the first few days I took two hours to dress in the morning—not from dandyism, but from a determination to spin out my time to the utmost. I ate my breakfast so slowly, that my coffee was cold before I had finished. I smoked like a lime-kiln, and I drank brandy (shame on me!) like a—Dutchman!

I got sick of all this. I gave up shaving as a superfluous luxury. I wore no clothes but a shirt, a pair of trousers, and a pair of shoes and stockings. I neither drank, nor dressed, nor ate, nor smoked. I lay down all day and *vegetated.*

On about the fifth or sixth day—I kept little account of time—I saw a horseman approaching the Post. As he came nearer I perceived that he

was a black man! Although I guessed his errand I felt delighted to see him, as I was sure he would want my services in some way or other, which would relieve the horrible monotony of my existence. I jumped to my feet to receive him.

"What now?" I shouted, as he rode up.

"Where 's the master?" he asked.

"I am the master here now; what do you want?"

"Ah, master, those black villains (the Kafirs) have stolen three of my horses."

"I 'm delighted; hurrah!" shouted I, throwing up my wide-awake.

The black man stared in wonderment.

"Go on," I said; "tell us what you want."

"I want the master to let his men help me follow the spoor, and see if we can catch the villains."

"All right. Out, guard, there!"

I was a new man! The lately stagnant blood now coursed freely through my veins; the drowsiness that seemed to have settled on all my senses was gone, and all my energies were awakened—to do a policeman's duty!

Away we started, myself and Piet mounted, and the men on foot. On reaching Piet's kraal, he pointed out to the Hottentots the direction

of the spoor, or trail, of his missing horses. These gentry then led the way, and we followed under their guidance, not a single one of the Europeans being able to distinguish the signs of a horse's hoof-marks, while the Hottentots and Piet could apparently see them as plainly as the grass itself. About a mile and a half from the kraal the spoor disappeared into the bush, and of course was lost—and so also were Piet's horses. Had we been able to trace them over the boundary into any Kafir chief's territory, such chief would have been bound, at the half-yearly settlement of accounts, to make restitution, by giving to our government the number of horses so tracked into his country. But, as the Kafirs are generally too wise to run the spoor over open ground the whole distance, in nine times out of ten they are enabled to "bag" their booty without the least chance of its ever being reclaimed. The colonists are forbidden to pass into Kafirland, and search for their stolen cattle there, though probably, if they did so, they would find them safe at the first Kafir kraal in possession of the very thieves who had just stolen them. Such are the wise treaties between the colony and the border tribes, offering to the latter every facility to commit robbery with impunity, and exposing

the farmer to the chance of daily rapine and murder.

We went back again after having performed our "gallant services" to our country, and I dined on tough steaks and Indian corn, more heartily than of late, because I really had done *something* during the day.

Next morning I made up my mind to ride over to old Jan Rens, the soldier-hating Dutchman; so mounting my nag, and shouldering my double-barrel, away I cantered. A couple of hours' ride brought me in sight of Jan's dwelling, situate on a plain that bore some evidence of fertility. The house itself was the invariable old Cape boer's, a wattle-and-daub structure with a thatched roof, and a gable end in the centre of it. Near it were extensive-looking kraals for cattle, a few Hottentot huts and a heap of hungry yelping curs. A tall, burly figure stood at the door of the dwelling whom I rightly guessed to be Jan himself.

"Good day, Mynheer," said I, summoning up my best Dutch—I only knew about fifty words in the whole language—and to knock a conversation out of those seemed about as difficult a feat as Paganini's tunes on one string of a violin.

Mynheer looked "glumpy," but he asked me

to "off-saddle," and enter; for, to give him his due, a Dutch boer never forgets to be hospitable. I accepted the invitation, and took my seat in the "fore-house," or large centre room of the dwelling.

The Dutchman asked me who I was, and I soon saw that I by no means rose in his estimation when I announced my profession. I tried the old fellow on every subject that I could find a word for, but with little success, till, at last, I asked him about hunting. He looked up as much as to ask me what the deuce *I* knew about it. However he condescended to tell me that he seldom hunted at all now, except when the game was a lion. As for *that*, he was always ready for one, and hoped to help to kill one to-morrow. I jumped up in a fit of enthusiasm, caught the old fellow by the hand, and insisted on accompanying him. I rose six feet in his estimation at one bound: he gave me a pipe and some Cape brandy, slung three melons to my saddle when I departed, and booked me for to-morrow's lion-hunt on the spot.

I dined with the appetite of a cormorant that day.

I won't boast; and so I candidly confess that I didn't sleep five minutes during the whole

of that night, so exciting to my mind were the thoughts of to-morrow's lion-hunt. I thought of all I had ever read on the subject; I thought of Wombwell's menagerie, the Zoological Gardens, the royal arms, Major Cornwallis Harris's book of wild sports, and the French Nimrod's letters from Algeria—in fact everything that had a lion in it. Gordon Cumming was a name unknown then, and so his wonderful and veracious sketches were not mingled with the visions that flitted before my mind's eye. I was very excited and perchance a little nervous; but I don't think I was at all fearful, and I am quite sure I was very eager for the fray.

Ten o'clock next morning saw me again at old Rens's door: and this time the good man welcomed me with genuine warmth, though he cast doubtful glances at my Westley Richards. A Dutch boer never believes in anything but his own long gun, which is something less than six feet in length, and a trifle under a hundred pounds in weight.

Six or eight boers joined us at breakfast, and afterwards we all started, together with about twenty Hottentots and fifty dogs—among which latter there was not one whose pedigree could have been traced by the most knowing of dog-fanciers.

Half-an-hour's canter brought us to the place where the monarch of the forest was supposed to be lurking. He had carried off a juvenile ox two days before, and the blood had been tracked to the cover we were approaching, by old Jan himself. The dogs were now laid on and began yelping away, as these abominable curs always do, so that it is difficult to know whether they have really started any game or not. A council of war was hurriedly called to decide on our plans, but before two words had been uttered by any of the deliberators, some of the horses began to snort and shiver, when an old boer cried, "Almachte!"

Turning our eyes in the direction of his, we saw, within thirty yards of us, a magnificent lion just emerged from a turn of the pathway in the bush and looking coolly, though in some surprise, at us. My own impulse was to pitch my double-barrel to my shoulder and take aim; but old Jan roared out to me to desist. The lion at the same moment turned from us and trotted quietly away. We followed at the same pace: then some of the more adventurous increased theirs—whereupon his majesty turned round and seemed to say, "Let me go my own pace and I shall not interfere with you; but if you inconvenience me—look out!"

At this moment the dogs sprang out of the

bush beyond the lion and charged him in the rear. He seemed to hesitate a moment what to do—another instant, and with a roar I shall never forget to my dying day, he charged at us—at *me!* I recollect very little more except that I fired one barrel, wildly enough, no doubt, and the next moment with a terrific spring the lion had hurled me backwards to the earth at the same instant (as I afterwards learnt) receiving a ball right through his heart, aimed by the unerring hand of old Jan Rens.

A fortnight afterwards I awoke from a sound sleep to find myself slowly recovering from a brain-fever produced by the thump on the head I had met with in my fall. I was lying in old Jan Rens's best bed, and his kind old frouw was tending me with the care and gentleness of a fond mother. The old man himself, as soon he was allowed to speak to me, showed me the lion's skin which he declared to be *my* trophy—though Heaven knows my claim to it was small enough. However, I accepted it as a present from my warm-hearted host—and I keep it for his sake to this day.

I was not sorry to learn that I was superseded in my command of "Blink Post" and ordered to

return to Graham's Town as soon as I was convalescent. Whatever little regrets I felt at parting with the good folks who had doubly saved my life, I could not but think that a brain fever was well worth having when it freed a man from duty at a Cape outpost.

CHAPTER XIX.

A FEW WORDS ON THE PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE CAPE.

SELDOM has the aspect of any colony presented a more melancholy picture than that of the Cape at this moment. Each succeeding mail brings accounts of fresh disasters—I had almost written fresh disgraces—for is it *not* a disgrace for the flower of the British army to be kept at bay and well-nigh beaten by the wretched savages of South Africa? Ten thousand soldiers—English soldiers—picked regiments! Did you not imagine, fellow-Briton, that they were a match for any fifteen, or even twenty, thousand other troops in the world? Would you not have pitted them against that number of Frenchmen, and have staked your credit, your property, your life on the issue? How many Sikhs or Afghans would you have thought worthy to cope with them? How many Cossacks, Turks, Persians, Hindoos, or Chinese? How many Kafirs—? Trouble not

yourself, my friend, with arithmetical calculations. Some twenty thousand of the latter are all that are now in arms against your gallant countrymen, and if they do not beat them soundly assuredly the red-coats have not yet thrashed the no-coats.

Why is this? Alas! there are many reasons for so strange a fact. Let me record some of them. In the first place, our gallant red-coats are of little use at all save as targets for the Kafirs. They are shot down by enemies whom they cannot see, or whom they cannot hit when they do see them. It is a splendid target that same scarlet coat—see how clearly it looms upon the eye in the far distance. No hazy indistinctness about it to puzzle the looker on, or render his aim uncertain. Even when those bushes intervene, though you see not the man—neither his face, nor his shako, nor his trousers — yet there is the piece of scarlet cloth glaring through the boughs, take steady aim at that, for a soldier's heart beats behind it, and a bullet sent through that gaudy garment hurls one more shilling target to the dust.

How safely the wily savage lurks that did the deed! No scarlet, or any other, coat encumbers him; his skin is copper-coloured or of a dusky-

brown. The rocks behind which he slinks are of the same hue as he, so are the branches of the thick underwood, and so are the stems of the tall aloes. Nay, a brave Captain of dragoons did once address a stirring appeal to his men as he drew them up and prepared to charge the enemy posted on the hill—he knew they would conquer or die and *he* would lead them on to death or victory, "Charge then!" The hill is gained, but the enemy stirs not. Providence has not given power of locomotion to aloes, and "the enemy" were aloes only.

But to make the case of the poor shilling target still worse, he has a musket which is almost useless. Those long guns which the boers of South Africa love, and which the Hottentots and Kafirs have learnt, through them, to use are of greater range and truer carrying than the regulation firelock of her Majesty's regular infantry. Moreover, they are in the hands of men who know how to use them better—men who are accustomed to pick off a bounding springbok at full speed two hundred yards away, and to aim steadily at an enemy's head at the same distance; while the ordinary soldier is merely trained to "let off" his piece, and fire at the mass of men in rank opposed to him. How

many of his shots take effect? I believe it has been calculated at about one in sixteen! How many of the Kafirs' and the Hottentots' bullets do mischief? Probably eight out of ten.

The rifleman is a more useful man. His dress is better for bush-fighting, less conspicuous, though it might be improved in this respect. Moreover, he has a better and truer weapon, and he has been trained to use it with individual effect. Doubtless Macomo and his followers have discovered that they would rather face a thousand red-coats than two hundred riflemen. But the latter are comparatively a small portion of our troops engaged at the Cape.

As if to add to the terrible disadvantages under which our soldiers labour, treachery and desertion have been rife in the camp. Nearly the whole of the Cape corps, composed of Hottentots, mutinied. One would have imagined that they would have been at once disbanded and disarmed. But no: they were scolded and suspended from duty for a time, and then again taken into favour, and their arms restored to them. Look at the result of this weak folly. Colonel Fordyce, the hero, *par excellence*, of the war, is shot dead by a Hottentot who deserted from our camp only two days before. Lieutenant

Gordon is pierced by two bullet wounds of which he afterwards dies; and when one of the balls is extracted, it is recognized, from the peculiarity of its form and calibre, to be one of those served out to our own troops *only the previous day!*

All these are facts showing the disadvantages under which our troops are fighting. But even admitting them all to their fullest extent, can we pronounce them sufficient to account for our never-ceasing reverses in this South African campaign? Most certainly not! The forces now at the Cape are far more than sufficient to protect the colony from any aggressive movement of the Kafirs, far more than sufficient to carry on the offensive against them, if the first movements on our part had been made with the commonest prudence and foresight—I will not say generalship, for it is an absurdity to suppose that any military tact, worthy of such a name, was required in the first operations against the rebellious savages. Sir Harry Smith is miserably incompetent for the task before him, and from the dilemma in which he has now placed us he will not be able to extricate us with honour to the army, without immense reinforcements. So long as the Kafirs pursue the system which Macomo is now adopting of holding their own ground, I do

not believe that Sir Harry has sense, tact, force, or generalship, to dislodge his sable antagonist from his mountain fastness.

But why was this absurd war ever begun at all —at least in the form in which it *was* commenced? Why did Sir Harry Smith, with a paltry handful of men, throw himself, by way of sea, into the heart of Kafirland, instead of defending the frontiers of the colony and driving the Kafirs further and further away from that line? There is no explanation for such an absurdity but that of rashness—vain, foolish, hot-headed rashness. He thought, forsooth, to "terrify" the Kafirs into submission by the sound of his name, and the mere news of his arrival. Had he asked the first colonist he met he might have learnt that so far from being the terror of the Kafirs, he was their constant laughing-stock, that his bombastic speeches, his pantomimic antics, and his unseemly oaths were repeated and imitated with intense gusto by the very men they were intended to alarm, in the presence of their applauding and delighted fellow-savages.

That one false move has been the real cause of all our subsequent disasters. The services of nearly all the troops in the colony had first to be wasted in extricating him from the meshes into

which he had so recklessly plunged — to save him, in fact, from being at once surrounded and murdered by the Kafirs. Meanwhile the frontier of the colony was left defenceless; and plunder, arson and murder, the three best-beloved amusements of the Kafir people, were indulged in by them almost unchecked.

It is painful to pursue the subject of this General's deficiencies; but without a due exposure of them not only is our position in South Africa misunderstood, but in my opinion the good name of our brave troops there will be tarnished by failures which must be laid to *his* score and not to theirs. Let any one turn to the history of the present war as contained in the newspapers and in Sir Harry's own dispatches, and see if he can find the record of one single movement made by him in the whole campaign? Not one! On the contrary, he sits in King William's Town writing general orders and dispatches—telling his staff to do all sorts of impossible feats and waiting to hear the result—strongly reminding us of Mr. James Bland addressing his army in one of Planché's extravaganzas :—

> Go forth, brave army—go and conquer—go!
> And when you've won the battle—let me know.

It would be rash to venture on any prophecy as to the period of the termination of the present war. My own impression is, that Sir Harry Smith will *never* be able to bring it to an end with any amount of troops which England can spare him; unless, indeed, he patches up another hollow peace with the Kafirs, and then proclaims that they are subdued and disheartened. In such case I shall regard the peace as a mere interlude in which the Kafir will rest for a time, wait till half the troops have left the colony, and then begin war again with fresh energies and recruited strength.

There is one hope meanwhile, viz.: that the Cape colonists will by that time have a representative government, and be thus enabled to prevent a fresh war or to bring it to a speedy termination if once commenced. The constitution which has been slowly and hardly wrung from Lord Grey, though by no means perfect, is better than none at all. It will enable the colony to manage its own affairs; and it is reasonable to suppose that they know how to do so, better than a gentleman of red-tape education in an office at Whitehall. Most of the alterations made by Lord Grey in the sections suggested by the Attorney-General of the colony are injudicious,

especially those relating to the no-property qualification. He tries to make the *amende* by determining that no person shall be allowed to vote but such as can write. *Apropos* of this, a knotty point has suggested itself to me. I once asked a Dutch boer with whom I was having some dealings whether he could write. He replied, "No!"

"Then you must put your mark to this," said I, handing him a receipt which I read to him.

"What for?" he asked. "*My mark!*"

"Yes, certainly, since you cannot write your name."

I shall never forget his look of contemptuous indignation as he answered: "I *can* write my name!" and did it forthwith.

I found this the case with a great number of the boers—they could sign their names; but they could not write another word nor read one written by any one else.

CASE, then, for the opinion of Mr. Porter, her Majesty's Attorney-General of the Cape colony:—

"Can a man who is able to sign his name only, be said to be a man who can write within the meaning of the terms of the New Constitution?"

You may smile, good reader; but the right of franchise of many a respectable, sensible and wealthy old boer will depend upon the answer.

Another defect in the new Constitution is in leaving the seat of government still at Cape Town. I have so often commented on this before, that I need not pursue the subject further in these observations: but can anything more injudicious be conceived than that of retaining the seat of both the representative and the executive Government at a place situated six hundred miles from the only difficult point in the colony—namely, its Kafir border?

When the Cape colonists commence self-government, doubtless one of their first acts will be to embody a militia throughout the land. Every man in the country, between certain ages, will be a soldier, and the most fit and effectual soldier to contend with the savage enemies across the boundary. This will be in effect a revival of the old Dutch Commando system—a system, with all its faults, the most efficient in repressing the rapine and murder of the Kafirs, and under which no such war as the present could have originated.

That which the colonists have mainly to attain is complete self-defence. This they must, and will do, by resisting simultaneously any attempt at violence or even petty larceny on the part of the border tribes, and retaliating instantaneously,

vigorously and severely, the slightest injury inflicted on themselves. It is the only way of dealing with savages, and above all with Kafirs. These people do not understand forbearance—it is only another name with them for weakness and folly, and they do not appreciate mercy—with them it means simply cowardice. Had this attitude of determination been all along maintained by the Colonial Government, had they repressed and punished wrong with a strong and ready hand, and shown the Kafirs that theft would at all times be followed by ruin, and violence by death, the present contempt for our weakness and doubt of our real strength, would never have taken possession of the Kafir's breast. The colonists know this well—they have never ceased to proclaim it and urge it on their rulers; but their cries have been unheard. Now is the time come when they may *act* on their own convictions. But, alas! how much mischief has been done in the meantime, and how little prospect does there appear at the present moment of a termination of the bloody struggle between the white man and the savage on the plains and in the mountains of South Africa!

The Orange River Sovereignty is the title given to a large tract of country lying to the north of

the Eastern Division of the Cape Colony. It is inhabited by native tribes and by a race of half-casts called the Griquas or Bastards. They are an ill-conditioned, dishonest, and turbulent set of fellows among themselves; but they are not a set of common cattle-stealers like the Kafirs, and I know of no reason why we should not at all times have remained on peaceful terms with them. It seems, however, that the "powers that be" in South Africa have managed to embroil themselves with these people, and instead of leaving them like the Kilkenny cats to devour one another, we have taken part in their squabbles, till our troops there run a chance of suffering a fate somewhat similar to the tragical one of the cats aforesaid.

What we could want with a resident agent among these people no colonist has yet been able to explain. The truth is that a great number of the Dutch 'boers who had the bad taste (!) to be disgusted with British rule in the Cape Colony emigrated to the regions I have now mentioned. The Colonial Government, not contented with driving them from their lands and homesteads by its own injustice, was indignant at seeing that the poor emigrants had found pastures elsewhere, and could live in prosperity, and protect and govern themselves in peace though possessed of neither

wealth, troops, decorated Governors, or red-tape colonial secretaries. It was irritating to their self-esteem to see men doing better without them than with them—and so they must affect a protective right to the new-found pastures, and under pretence of preserving order set the boers and the Griquas against each other, and then draw off from Kafirland (where we had not enough of them) quantities of our troops to fight in a quarrel with which we had no earthly concern, and in which it is a disgrace to the British name to be mixed up. Let it be borne in mind that we have *two* wars in South Africa, and the existence of the one tends not a little to retard the termination of the other.

Dark and gloomy indeed is the aspect of South Africa now, and few are the rays of hope yet gleaming forth for its future. But its fate is in the hands of a God who does justice to nations as to men. In that faith I look hopefully on the destiny of the land where I spent so many happy years, and which I still love so dearly: and I beseech the reader to believe that in spite of calumny the cause of the Cape colonists is that of right and justice—that their sufferings and losses have been greater than might well be enumerated — their patience and forbearance

worthy of English Christians—their loyalty and their love of their mother country not surpassed in heartiness and sincerity by any portion of the great empire on which the sun never sets.

THE END.

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